

**“Looming A Little Larger Than Its Mere Geographical Size:”
Puerto Rico in John F. Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress**

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Recuerdo de Tiempos Pasados

El ex gobernador de Puerto Rico, Luis Muñoz Marín, (derecha) y el administrador de Fomento, Teodoro Moscoso, recuerdan tiempos pasados al admirar una vieja fotografía de ellos dos donde aparecen con una joven en los comienzos del programa de industrialización en la Isla. Al comentar la presencia de la joven el ex gobernador comentó: "Para ella fue que trabajamos". El señor Moscoso recibió el pasado sábado un homenaje de parte de la Asociación de Productos de Puerto Rico en un hotel de la Capital a la cual asistió el ex gobernador Luis Muñoz Marín. (Foto por Lou Alers)



Teodoro Moscoso and Luis Muñoz Marín at an homage for Moscoso held in San Juan. Muñoz Marín remarks, "We worked for her [Puerto Rico]," 1973, (FLMM).

“The island is no longer a liability but a credit [to the United States]. It also is beginning to loom a little larger than its mere geographical size would indicate because it is beginning to contribute to the outside world -- especially to the United States -- something that is valuable and scarce today: understanding and good-will. Because of all this Puerto Rico has become politically interesting in eyes that until recently passed it over as geographically invisible.”

— **Luiz Muñoz Marín**, writing for *Foreign Affairs* (July 1954)



John F. Kennedy and Luis Muñoz Marín at Kennedy's arrival in Isla Verde Airport, December 15, 1961, (PRFAA).

Introduction

On December 15, 1961, Luis Muñoz Marín, Puerto Rico's first democratically elected governor, hosted a dinner in honor of President John F. Kennedy at La Fortaleza, the governor's official residence overlooking San Juan harbor. In his welcoming remarks, Muñoz emphasized a long-standing alliance between the United States and Puerto Rico that stood "for progress with justice, for progress with liberty."¹ Kennedy echoed the governor's sentiments, noting that the work undertaken by Muñoz, his "devoted associates," and "the people of this island" to bring economic, political, and social change to Puerto Rico in the past decade inspired "us...to feel that we can carry on the great cooperative effort throughout the entire hemisphere."²

¹ "Welcoming Remarks by Governor Luis Muñoz Marín," 15 December 1961, *Kennedy & Muñoz*, Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA).

² "Remarks by President John F. Kennedy," 15 December 1961, *Kennedy & Muñoz*, PRFAA.



John F. Kennedy, Inés Mendoza de Muñoz Marín, and Luis Muñoz Marín at La Fortaleza, December 15, 1961, (PRFAA).

The great cooperative effort that both leaders alluded to was the Alliance for Progress: an ambitious foreign aid program announced by Kennedy, only two months into his presidency, in March of that year, following a proposal from Kennedy advisors that called for a new policy design and ideological approach in hemispheric relations.³ Through the following decade, US monetary aid would be used to bring about economic, political, and social development throughout Latin America. Not far from the new president's mind was the example of what could happen to a nation that failed to "modernize" in this democratic, liberal mold: only two years prior, the rise of Fidel Castro in Cuba presented the failure of US Cold War policies and, more dangerously, a model of development for the rest of Latin America to follow that was markedly nationalist, communist, and anti-American.⁴

Gathering in August 1961, the delegations of all members of the Organization of American States (except for Cuba) adopted the Charter of the Alliance for Progress. The document linked social,

³ Michael E. Latham, "Ideology, Social Science, and Destiny: Modernization and the Kennedy-Era Alliance for Progress," (*Diplomatic History*, 22.2, 1998), 208, 211.

⁴ Jeffrey F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 12.

economic, and political development, outlining a US promise to secure twenty billion USD in aid to bring about a series of social and economic reforms for the rest of the decade.⁵ Kennedy chose Teodoro Moscoso, a Puerto Rican businessman and politician known as the architect of Operation Bootstrap, the program that oversaw Puerto Rico's rapid development from an impoverished, agricultural economy into an industrial one, to oversee this massive, highly-publicized program. Puerto Rico's political elite served as a guiding force in the formation of the Alliance, aiding the United States in its task to shape Latin America in its own image at the height of the Cold War.

While the leaders behind the Alliance for Progress often chose to highlight the program as a hemispheric partnership that broke away from the era of US gunboat diplomacy and support for military dictatorships, the Alliance was in fact another program in a line of previous pan-American efforts, with ideas emerging from both US and Latin American actors. Historian Peter Smith argues that some Latin American leaders chose to respond to the US quest for hemispheric hegemony by developing and promoting pan-American identities that could unify their various states into a "continental counterweight" against the United States.⁶ Yet, the United States also embraced pan-American ideas as a way to further cement its hegemonic control. In 1890, Washington, D.C, served as the site of the first Pan American conference, where delegates debated proposals such as a regional customs union. Several Latin American leaders rejected the concept of pan-Americanism as promoted by the United States as attempts to consolidate US dominion over Latin America.⁷ The "Good Neighbor" policy adopted by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration in the 1930s, as a state-led pan-American project, can be seen as a precursor to the Alliance in its expressed desires to engage the nations of Latin America as "equal partners engaged in the collective promotion of

⁵ Latham, p. 211.

⁶ Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 88.

⁷ *Ibid*, 95.

hemispheric interests.” Yet while the United States moved away from its more explicit and aggressive tactics in consolidating hegemonic control over the Western hemisphere, Smith argues the “Good Neighbor” policy represents a culmination of the trends that emerged during an era of US imperialism over Latin America to impose and consolidate US hegemony, not by political intervention and occupation, but by the establishment of a US sphere of influence.⁸ The Alliance for Progress was yet another foray into US-sponsored pan-Americanism, which aimed to contribute to Washington’s containment policy by making allies of Latin American governments to preserve this US regional sphere of influence at the height of the Cold War.

As Kennedy noted in his remarks to Muñoz during the reception at La Fortaleza, Puerto Rico’s leadership could assume the crucial role of bringing US and Latin American leaders together in the Alliance for Progress. The 1940s and 1950s marked a departure away from the professed goodwill of the “Good Neighbor” policy: as the United States courted anticommunist, dictatorial regimes throughout Latin America, it also isolated many democratic, politically moderate leaders. This unique positioning of the Puerto Rican leadership stemmed from two major political and economic developments on the island during the decade prior. The first was Operation Bootstrap, the rapid industrial development campaign which officially began in 1947 with the passing of the Industrial Incentives Act, a law that offered generous tax exemptions to the United States to attract foreign investment.⁹ Teodoro Moscoso, director of the Puerto Rican Industrial Development Company (a government-owned corporation more commonly known as Fomento) and administrator of the Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration (the government agency that oversaw industrialization),

⁸ Ibid, 65-67.

⁹ Deborah Berman Santana, “Puerto Rico’s Operation Bootstrap: Colonial Roots of a Persistent Model for ‘Third World’ Development,” (*Revista Geografica*, 124, 1998), 94.

had been Bootstrap's chief architect.¹⁰ Upon winning over the once-skeptical Muñoz to his economic development plan, Moscoso became a key figure of the *Partido Popular Democrático*, rendering the party's political and economic policies inseparable.

In the 1950s and 1960s, government planners across the United States hailed Operation Bootstrap as a miracle, citing conventional economic indicators of growth (increase in GDP, increase in per capita income, increase in consumer spending, and the establishment of more industrial plants) as evidence of its unexpected and unprecedented success.¹¹ In a June 1960 interview, Moscoso noted that Bootstrap's seeming success inspired similar development programs in Trinidad and Jamaica and had "great potential" to show other underdeveloped nations what could be accomplished within their economies.¹² Puerto Rico, due to Operation Bootstrap's seeming success, was understood to embody the promise of the Alliance for Progress: economic prosperity and rapid development that could reconcile US democratic liberalism with the sociohistorical particularities of Latin America.

The adoption of the *Estado Libre Asociado* ("Free Associated State") in 1952 was the other development that facilitated Puerto Rico's use as a model for the Alliance for Progress. This new political status, officially translated into English as "commonwealth," held that the United States would retain sovereignty over the mostly autonomous island, which resolved the perennial debate over statehood or independence by settling for neither. Muñoz characterized this status as a result of Puerto Rican "creativity:" by voting for the commonwealth status in a popular referendum, the masses chose

¹⁰ The Puerto Rican Industrial Development Company, more commonly known as *Fomento*, an abbreviation of its Spanish name, is a government-owned company with the aim of establishing trade, cooperatives, and industrial operations in Puerto Rico. Founded in 1942, the company initially used government funds to sustain its industrial development. After a series of technical failures and setbacks, Moscoso and Fomento changed their strategy and began to look to (US) private capital, rather than the funds of a pro-labor government, as the way to fund the industrial development that Puerto Rico needed. Following the passage of the 1947 Industrial Incentives Act, Operation Bootstrap formally took off as an industrial development program powered by US private capital investment. For more information, see A.W. Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso and Puerto Rico's Operation Bootstrap*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), 42-48.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹² Teodoro Moscoso, "Puerto Rico: Up from Poverty." *Challenge*, 8.9 (1960), p. 32-33, 36.

to reap the practical benefits of remaining in close association with the United States, while still honoring their “autonomist” spirit as a distinctly “Latin American nation.”¹³ Puerto Rico’s status was intrinsically tied to its economic well-being: independence, Muñoz argued, would put restrictions on its free trade with the US while statehood would bring federal tax collection, both harming the flow of private investment coming into the island from the mainland under Operation Bootstrap. The new political status bound Puerto Rico, politically and economically, closer to the United States. Puerto Rico, Muñoz insisted, had shed its colonial status: its relationship with the metropole was now one based “on a constitution written by the people of Puerto Rico themselves” and mutually agreed upon by the United States and Puerto Rico “in the nature of a compact.”¹⁴

Since the 1950s, these two developments within Puerto Rico, which the governing PPD touted as highly successful and progressive, positioned the small island to play an outsized role within inter-American relations. Politicians both in Washington and San Juan hailed Puerto Rico as a cultural bridge between North and Latin America, essential for a time when Washington considered it imperative to bolster inter-American cooperation in the fight for democracy and capitalism against Cuba’s alternative model of nationalism and communism.¹⁵ This understanding of Puerto Rico as an inter-American ambassador facilitated the rise of key PPD figures within the Alliance for Progress’s leadership, creating a unique moment in which a US territory aspired to influence US foreign policy.

¹³ Luis Muñoz Marín, “Puerto Rico and the U.S., Their Future Together,” (*Foreign Affairs*, 32.4, 1954), 548.

¹⁴ Luis Muñoz Marín, “Development through Democracy,” (*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 285, 1953), 5.

¹⁵ For Americans who supported this view of Puerto Rico as a hemispheric diplomat and as a development model for Latin America, see: Pierre Bédard, “Puerto Ricans’ Contribution to Closer Inter-Cultural Ties in the Americas,” *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 35.9 (1962), and Byron White, “Puerto Rico: A Partial Development Model,” *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 22.4 (1963). For Puerto Ricans who supported this view, there is Resident Commissioner Antonio Fernos Isern, “The Role of Puerto Rico and its People in the Americas,” *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 35.9 (1962), and Juan M. Garcia-Passalacqua, “Puerto Rico en la ‘Alianza Para el Progreso,’” *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, 3.4 (1961).

This thesis aims to examine the Alliance for Progress' formation and implementation, not from the perspective of Washington, D.C, but from that of the Latin American leaders who saw the Alliance as an opportunity to consolidate their power in a moment where their leadership and political strength was under the threat of Cuban Revolution-inspired movements. These leaders, who called themselves the Democratic Left, were desperate to stay in power in the face of social and political movements inspired by changes in Cuba and sought to manipulate Cold War rhetoric to obtain US support. Castro, after all, had come to power by overthrowing a military dictatorship that had enjoyed US support. As the Kennedy administration pivoted away from supporting Latin American military dictatorships to prevent Cuban-Revolution-esque scenarios in other countries, the Democratic Left hoped to redirect US backing towards their own regimes. More particularly, this thesis is concerned with the Puerto Rican leaders who represented a particular kind of pro-US Latin American political moderatism and thus served as unifiers for the Democratic Left. These leaders viewed the Alliance for Progress as a way to inject Puerto Rican views and politicians into mainstream US foreign policy in a time where Puerto Rico's standing as a "commonwealth" of the United States was in flux.¹⁶

While many historians, such as Jeffrey Taffet, Stephen Rabe, Jerome Levinson, and Juan de Onís, have looked at the Alliance for Progress in the scope of previous US-Latin American relations, none of them have looked at the Alliance as a key point in *Puerto Rican* history. César Ayala and Rafael Bernabé, two Puerto Rican historians, argue that Muñoz and his political party, which came to prominence in the late 1930s by strongly identifying with New Deal politics, drew upon the political tradition of autonomism, which aimed to widen the insular government's "niche within—[without]

¹⁶ Countless historians of Puerto Rico have noted the ambiguity of the establishment of the Estado Libre Asociado; in the words of César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabé, "The PPD's unwillingness to demand a clear definition of the new relation ensured its ambiguous, limited, and static nature," *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 163.

defying the limits of—the colonial relation” between the United States and Puerto Rico.¹⁷ Ayala and Bernabé posit that Muñoz’s political *modus operandi* as governor of the young commonwealth consisted of a series of attempts to “finesse” the US Congress’ plenary (i.e., absolute and unrestricted) power over the island while simultaneously avoiding confrontation with the Washington establishment.¹⁸ The scope of this thesis is a political and diplomatic history of the Alliance for Progress as seen from San Juan: a look at how Muñoz and Moscoso attempt to use the Alliance as a tool to further their political interests and carve their own niche within US foreign policy.

Writing a diplomatic history for a non-sovereign territory may seem to be a strange project, but it is not without precedent. Puerto Rican historian Evelyn Vélez Rodríguez has extensively researched the PPD’s foreign policy, mainly focusing on the efforts of Muñoz to establish ties with like-minded political leaders throughout Latin America and to promote the newly-created commonwealth through various organizations and programs in the 1950s, with remarkably little US involvement. Vélez Rodríguez ends her work with the Cuban Revolution, an event that forced the leaders of Puerto Rico to stop their attempts to forge a relatively autonomous foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Latin America and to instead try to operate within the foreign policy apparatus of Washington, DC.¹⁹ The Cold War implications of the Cuban Revolution pushed the island’s leaders to promote their pro-US position and align themselves with Washington, with Muñoz’s Puerto Rico the antithesis to Castro’s Cuba. Yet Puerto Rican foreign policy ambitions did not disappear after the Cuban Revolution revitalized US involvement in the Caribbean and Latin America; rather, the island’s political leaders attempted to insert themselves into the United States’ foreign policy. Puerto Rican leadership in the Alliance for Progress represents the apex of the PPD’s foreign policy, with key island leaders obtaining

¹⁷ Ayala and Bernabé, 108.

¹⁸ Ibid, 162.

¹⁹ Evelyn Vélez Rodríguez, *Puerto Rico: Política Exterior Sin Estado Soberano, 1946-1964* (San Juan: Ediciones Callejón, 2014), 351.

high-ranking posts within the Washington establishment. This unprecedented achievement, however, was short-lived: both US Cold War interests and the colonial nature of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico placed limitations on the amount of influence that Puerto Rico could wield. The Alliance for Progress, which failed to bring about the economic and social reforms it promised, also ultimately failed to cement the PPD's status as key players in US-Latin American relations.

Part I: The Creation of the Alliance, 1959-1961

Eduardo Frei Montalva, former president of Chile, once noted that “the Alliance [for Progress] was essentially a Latin American conception which became reality because it was accepted by the United States and specially by President Kennedy, who understood it [the Alliance for Progress, the values the Charter of Punta del Este espoused] and injected “new life” into it.²⁰ While Montalva is not incorrect in his assessment, there is more nuance to the Alliance’s origins. The United States’ embrace of a seemingly more friendly and egalitarian foreign policy towards Latin America came after more than a decade of courting anti-communist dictatorships. Kennedy hoped to pivot away from the Truman and Eisenhower administration’s containment policies by nurturing liberal reformist alternatives to both dictatorship and communist revolution.²¹ Yet Kennedy did not merely come to hear the ideas floating around Latin America and decide to bring that rhetoric to the White House and the US diplomatic corps. The ideas that went into the formation of the Alliance were not broadly held but were instead the views of moderate, liberal Latin American leaders, who hoped to bring about progressive reform while being firmly aligned with the United States’ side of the Cold War. Muñoz, whose party had increasingly abandoned its popular, autonomist roots in favor of Bootstrap-style economic development and subsequent “free association” with its metropolis, represented perhaps the quintessential Democratic Left leader: moderate and committed to a type of reform acceptable to the United States. Through Muñoz, these ideas came to the White House, where the Kennedy administration accepted and incorporated them into a US foreign policy in need of a reboot to address the changes and perceived menaces of a new communist enemy in the Caribbean. Muñoz thus intended to use this seeming influence over the Kennedy administration to inject Puerto Rican political views and leading PPD officials into the nascent Alliance for Progress.

²⁰ Eduardo Frei Montalva, “The Alliance That Lost Its Way,” *Foreign Affairs*, 45.3 (1964), 441.

²¹ Smith, 161.

Whose Alliance?

Gathered at the resort city of Punta del Este, Uruguay, the leaders of the member states of the Organization of American States signed onto a new declaration that resolved to “to establish and carry forward an Alliance for Progress.”²² These leaders expressed their hope to usher in a new era of economic, political, and social development, invoking the language of prior American revolutions in detailing those aspirations.²³ While the Charter of Punta del Este, the blueprint which formalized the Alliance as an inter-continental program, spoke of the collective action and aspirations of the “American Republics,” it was John F. Kennedy who first uttered the words “Alliance for Progress” in public during his inaugural address: “we offer a special pledge—to convert our good words into good deeds—in a new alliance for progress—to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty.”²⁴ Taffet describes the Charter of Punta del Este as a document that established “a set of shared understandings about what the Latin Americans were to do and what support the United States would offer,” suggesting a conflict of interest and agency from the Alliance’s very inception.²⁵ Who had proposed the Alliance for Progress, and for what purpose? Moscoso often remarked on the plan’s Latin American origins and insisted upon its value as “a vast economic-social cooperative effort.”²⁶ Yet he also pronounced those words as the US Coordinator of the Alliance, a position that gave him more control over the Alliance’s implementation than his Latin American counterparts.

Throughout the 1950s, Taffet writes, US officials and policymakers came to the consensus that foreign aid was the responsibility of private banks and international organizations. This belief,

²² Noticeably absent from the document was a signature from Cuba.

²³ Organization of American States, “The Charter of Punta del Este, Establishing an Alliance for Progress Within the Framework of Operation Pan America; August 17, 1961,” Teodoro Moscoso Personal Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

²⁴ John F. Kennedy, Inauguration Address, January 20, 1961, The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, 2008, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/kennedy.asp.

²⁵ Taffet, 30.

²⁶ Teodoro Moscoso, notes for speech at Conference on Foreign Economic Council Policy, January 29, 1962, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 9, JFKL.

however, did not mean that the United States turned a blind eye to Latin American financial woes, but rather, that Washington believed that Latin American nations should help themselves by attracting industry-promoting private capital investment. Indeed, from 1953 to 1958 Latin America received \$738 million in US loans and grants, only 7% of the \$12.6 billion that the United States had dedicated in foreign aid to other countries.²⁷ Juscelino Kubitschek, the president of Brazil, also grappled with the problems facing Latin America, though he envisioned a wholly different solution to the one pursued by the Eisenhower administration. Writing to Eisenhower in 1958, Kubitschek suggested increased US economic aid to Latin America to “restore composure to continental unity” and ameliorate relations between Latin American nations and the United States. Upon receiving the green light from the Eisenhower Administration, Kubitschek met with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Roy Rubottom in Rio de Janeiro, where the Brazilian president proposed “Operation Pan America,” a development plan based on the idea of an extensive, decade-long economic partnership between the United States and Latin America. Washington, unconvinced of the viability of such a vast aid program, rejected Kubitschek’s proposal.

While Eisenhower and Dulles were hesitant to implement a vast multilateral aid program, Kubitschek’s ideas endured: two years later, Eisenhower sent a plan to the US Congress calling for a Social Progress Trust Fund to facilitate the appropriation of \$500 million towards Latin American development spending. By the time Congress passed Public Law 735 in September 1960, approving the Social Progress Trust Fund, Latin American nations were at work devising their own solutions to their economic woes. The Organization of American States consolidated a developmental framework—tax system reform, educational system reform, the expansion of health services to all, the creation of urban housing programs, the creation of agricultural credit institutions, bolstered

²⁷ Taffet, 13-14.

agricultural productivity, and the establishment of urban housing programs—in a report called the Act of Bogotá. It is important to note that this act was merely a declaration of ideals to pursue and not the framework for institutionalized changes: it neither set up a mechanism to guide Latin American policymakers nor suggested how foreign aid would factor into these changes.²⁸ The ideological contributions of these two proposals, both name-dropped in the preamble of the Alliance's charter, would often be invoked to point to the Alliance's "unmistakbl[e]...Latin American origin."²⁹ Thus, while Operation Pan America and the Act of Bogotá failed to bring any tangible changes to Latin America, they represented a shift in ideas—Kubitschek's call for hemispheric collaboration and Bogotá's list of desirable reforms—that would later be appropriated by the Alliance.

Any Latin American development program dependent upon foreign aid to achieve its goals would require the participation of the United States, as the hemisphere's economic powerhouse, bestowing upon the US an outsized role in the plan's implementation regardless of its role in the plan's ideological conception. Operation Pan America and the Act of Bogotá thus set the stage for the Alliance for Progress in Latin America, yet for the program to truly take off, it required changes in US attitudes towards foreign aid and economic development. The ideas conveyed in Operation Pan America and the Act of Bogotá had to be translated and conveyed to Washington to take root. Historian Abraham Lowenthal acknowledges how plans for the Alliance took hold under the Kennedy administration, as the early stages of a new presidency provided a greater degree of centralized policymaking, where bureaucrats are able to propose new measures as the incoming president takes time to "frame a coherent [foreign policy] formulation."³⁰ Kennedy certainly was amenable to new

²⁸ Ibid, 19.

²⁹ Carlos Sanz de Santamaria, address before the Special Session of the Council of the OAS, March 16, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 12, JFKL.

³⁰ Abraham F. Lowenthal, "United States Policy Toward Latin America: 'Liberal,' 'Radical,' and 'Bureaucratic' Perspectives," *Latin American Research Review*, 8.3 (1973), 16.

takes in Latin American relations: he was a young president, ready to bring vitality and newness to the Oval Office,³¹ strongly influenced by the social scientific theories of modernization,³² and eager to respond to the rise of Fidel Castro and the failure of the United States in preventing communism from taking root in a country so close to home. Lowenthal asserts that those with “a personal and ideological stake in promoting institutional democracy” became key players in formulating the Alliance for Progress—in other words, in rendering Kubitschek’s and the OAS’ ideas palatable for Washington.³³

Luis Muñoz Marín believed himself to be uniquely positioned to take on such a role. As governor of Puerto Rico, he had spent the 1950s establishing close political alliances with liberal democratic leaders across Latin America.³⁴ These leaders, first brought together in the 1930s, rallied around their intention to combat the military dictatorships emerging in countries such as Venezuela and the Dominican Republic, governments which enjoyed the support of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. Known as the Democratic Left (*Izquierda Democrática*), these liberal leaders distinguished themselves from left-wing political parties in Latin America (*partidos políticos de izquierda*) by supporting social reform, inspired by European socialist parties, and civil liberties, seen as “products of capitalist democracy.”³⁵ Víctor Haya de la Torre of Peru, who served as the Democratic Left’s ideological spokesman for his theories of moderate reform, was seen as one of the

³¹ Taffet, 12.

³² Latham, 214. Latham argues that the modernization theories of Walt Rostow (a national security adviser for Kennedy and Lyndon B Johnson) and Karl Deutsch, among others, functioned “as a powerful ideology about the nature of US society and its ability to accelerate, shape, and direct the forces of change in an increasingly post-colonial world.” Kennedy’s embrace of such ideas thus suggests an pivot away from the Eisenhower era’s laissez-faire view of Latin American economic development, and the acceptance of an ideology where the United States, a country that perfectly followed the path of modernization, could guide other nations in its path.

³³ Lowenthal, 17.

³⁴ For more on the development of Muñoz’s ties with Democratic Left leaders Betancourt and Figueres see: Vélez Rodríguez, chapters 5 and 6.

³⁵ Efrén Córdova, “La Izquierda Democrática Latinoamericana en la Doctrina y en la Práctica: APRA y Acción Democrática,” (*Mundo Hispano*, 1967), 194.

movement's key figures, along with Rómulo Betancourt of Venezuela, and José Figueres of Costa Rica.³⁶ After an invitation from Betancourt to participate in the 1950 Inter-American Pro-Democracy and Liberty Conference in Havana, Muñoz became involved with the Democratic Left.³⁷ He quickly developed close alliances with Betancourt and Figueres in the 1950s, while also antagonizing dictator Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. As a result, by 1960, Muñoz was regarded as one of the key figures in the Democratic Left. Muñoz became so influential within this circle that San Juan became a frequent spot for political exiles, with liberal allies Betancourt and Juan Bosch (of the



Dominican Republic) choosing to stay in La Fortaleza to escape political threats in their home countries.

Venezuelan President Rómulo Betancourt and Luis Muñoz Marín, (A. W. Maldonado).

In addition to being closely acquainted with the liberal leaders of Latin America, Muñoz also cultivated ties with members of Washington's foreign policy apparatus, namely Adolf Berle, a career diplomat specializing in Latin American affairs.³⁸ Adolf Berle, whom Kennedy would later name in charge of a task force entrusted with

advising the president on how his administration should best approach relations with Latin America,

³⁶ Angel M. Rivera Rivera, *Luis Muñoz Marín y la Revolución Cubana 1959-1962*, (San Juan: Editorial Patria, 2019), 159.

³⁷ Vélez Rodríguez, 196.

³⁸ Richard E. Welch, "Lippmann, Berle, and the U.S. Response to the Cuban Revolution," *Diplomatic History*, 6.2 (1982), 126.

had long been friends with the Puerto Rican governor: Berle often stayed at La Fortaleza, and Muñoz felt comfortable seeking his advice and assistance with regards to insular politics.³⁹ Muñoz thus had an “in” to both US and Latin American politics—and he made sure to use that voice. The opportunity to use those connections to speak to the implementation of US-Latin American relations came after the Cuban Revolution and Castro’s embrace of communism, when both Washington and the capitals of Latin America needed to devise a response to the emergence of a new political ideology in the region. The Puerto Rican governor took a strong stance on Cuba, making it clear that the “best way to prevent [communist] revolution in Latin America” was to “support existing democratic regimes while narrowing the gap between rich and poor.”⁴⁰ With those words, Muñoz spoke to his fellow liberal statesmen across Latin America, confronted with opposition from the right and now the left—yet he also spoke to the White House, conveying his message in English and through a US-based newspaper. Leaders in Latin America, at least, those who identified with the Democratic Left’s politics, supported democratic regimes and socioeconomic reform; it was the United States Muñoz had to convince.

Originally a supporter of Castro, a popular leader who brought about the end to an undemocratic dictatorship, Muñoz later regarded the Cuban premier’s turn to communism as a “mistake.”⁴¹ Nonetheless, Muñoz (with the support his Democratic Left allies) cautioned against a strong US reaction to the Cuban Revolution in an interview with *New York Times* correspondent Paul Kennedy: while Castro may have erred in choosing communism as his instrument of change, Muñoz

³⁹ Letters between Adolf Berle and Luis Muñoz Marín, March 12, 19, 1957; Luis Muñoz Marín to Adolf Berle, June 1, 1959, Section 5: Luis Muñoz Marín Personal Papers, Governor of Puerto Rico, 1948-1965, Series 2, Cartapacio 51, FLMM. Interestingly, the 1959 letter concerns the Murray-Fernós Bill, a series of proposed “clarifications and modifications” (i.e., increased autonomy) to Puerto Rico’s political status, that never passed the legislature. Muñoz Marín asks Berle to gather letters from influential figures in support of the bill.

⁴⁰ “Munoz calls for Aid to Liberal Regimes,” *The Sun*, December 11, 1960, Section 5, Series 2, Cartapacio 52, FLMM.

⁴¹ For more on Muñoz Marín’s views on the Cuban Revolution, Castro, and their implications for Latin America’s democratic revolutions, see Vélez Rodríguez, *Puerto Rico: Política Exterior sin Estado Soberano*, chapter 8, and Angel M. Rivera Rivera *Luis Muñoz Marín y la Revolución Cubana 1959-1962*, (San Juan: Editorial Patria, 2019).

“The Best Advice,” *The Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 12, 1960, Section 5, Series 19, Cartapacio 52, FLMM.

reasoned that the revolutionary spirit he represented should not be squashed, but rather rerouted and guided under liberal democratic principles. Muñoz denounced the idea of a unilateral US response (particularly, armed intervention) as counterproductive, reminiscent of the tense relations of the days of the Monroe Doctrine and damaging to the liberal democratic revolution he hoped to see across Latin America.⁴² Jaime Benítez, rector of the University of Puerto Rico and a member of the Muñoz intelligentsia, framed the liberal Latin American vision in this way: at a time when the “oppressed and disenfranchised” people of Latin America sought to improve their lives and their countries, could “the United States avoid being maneuvered into becoming the antagonist of such mass movements and such mass aspirations, which exist whether or not the Cuban revolution truly represents them?”⁴³ Muñoz became fixed on the issue of Castro, often writing notes to himself regarding communism and the fight for democracy. In one note, he emphasized that “we do not live...merely to beat the Russians;” while it is unclear if he referred to US leaders, Latin American leaders, or Puerto Rican leaders, it is clear that the governor believed in using the Cuban Revolution as an impetus to bring about Latin American development and felt strongly about falling into the trap of viewing Cuba and Castro through the lens of Cold War binary politics.⁴⁴ Muñoz felt it was crucial to convince the United States that the main issue in the region was not to oppose Castro and contain communism, but to bolster and ally with the region’s fledgling liberal regimes, desperate for US support to maintain power.

Rather than just proclaiming his views in press conferences, however, the Puerto Rican governor also brought his ideas directly to the US president. In one letter to Kennedy, Muñoz insisted

⁴² “An interview with Gov. Muñoz: Liberals Still With U.S,” *The San Juan Star*, April 1961, Section 5, Series 19, Cartapacio 56, FLMM.

⁴³ Jaime Benítez, “The United States, Cuba, and Latin America,” Remarks at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, March 6, 1961, Section 5, Series 19, Cartapacio 54, FLMM.

⁴⁴ Luis Muñoz Marín dictated notes, January 9, 1960, Section 5, Series 19, Cartapacio 49, FLMM.

that the Bay of Pigs operation (an attack against a popular movement of “a few thousand Cubans from the outside”) would result in failure, and urged the United States to recognize that,

“A revolution should be internal with effective help. This help should be channelled through persons whose sole political mission is to safeguard from Communist infiltration, but who are sophisticated enough to make clear and undoubted distinctions between Communism and democratic social change whatever its nature.”⁴⁵

This advice over how to best approach the Cuban revolution allowed Muñoz to segue into arguments for a greater US role in supporting and fomenting “democratic social change” throughout Latin America. In December 1960, a month before Kennedy ever proclaimed the words “alliance for progress” to the American public in his inaugural address, Muñoz wrote Kennedy another letter, strongly urging him to make a statement on a hemisphere-wide “alliance for progress.”⁴⁶ On January 18, 1961, two days before Kennedy’s inauguration, the Puerto Rican governor spoke with the president-elect at New York’s Hotel Carlyle, where he once again urged Kennedy to consider throwing his wholehearted support behind an alliance between the region’s democratic governments.⁴⁷

These interactions between Muñoz and Kennedy suggest that the governor’s views influenced Kennedy’s own stance towards Latin America. While one cannot discern the full extent to which Muñoz influenced Kennedy’s embrace of an alliance for progress, their exchanges prior to the inaugural address in which Kennedy first unveiled his approach to US-Latin American affairs echoes and aligns with the ideas the Puerto Rican governor had discussed with him. In breaking away with past administrations’ foreign policy, Kennedy did not act in opposition to Muñoz’s advice to encourage liberal democratic change across “our sister republics south of the border” as a policy of communist containment. Although Washington took a harsher stance against Castro’s government than Muñoz

⁴⁵ Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, April 28, 1961, Section 5, Series 1, Cartapacio 10, FLMM.

⁴⁶ Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, December 13, 1960, Section 5, Series 1, Cartapacio 5, FLMM.

⁴⁷ Luis Muñoz Marín dictated notes on conversation with John F. Kennedy on January 18, 1961, from 11 am to 2 pm, Section 5, Series 1, Cartapacio 4, FLMM.

may have liked, the central idea to his argument, to prioritize and support democratic regimes, became a part of the Kennedy administration's foreign policy. Even the media noticed that Muñoz, who "has earned [the] right to speak both to Latin America and the United States" due (in part) to the success of "his enlightened 'Operation Bootstrap' [that] helped lift an American Commonwealth out of the mire of hopeless poverty," had the ear of President Kennedy and was subsequently slated for a high-ranking position within the new administration as an adviser on Latin American affairs.⁴⁸ While Muñoz publicly announced that he had rejected the position as he felt primarily responsible to the Puerto Rican people and intended to continue serving them, the fact that he was even considered for the position is a testament to the value Kennedy had for his political views.⁴⁹

Kennedy was slow to name his Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, a key post in US-Latin American affairs. Instead, he assembled a task force, under the leadership of Adolf Berle, the diplomat specializing in Latin American affairs who had close ties with Muñoz, to devise a new foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Latin America.⁵⁰ Kennedy believed that Berle, who had advocated for a strong stance against Castro since 1959, would be capable of handling Latin American affairs with the goodwill of "the Good Neighbor policy of the Roosevelt years" while also meeting the dangers of a communist infiltration throughout the region.⁵¹ Berle made a point of including his friend Muñoz's thoughts in his analysis by naming two influential members of the Muñoz administration to the task force: Teodoro Moscoso and Arturo Morales Carrión.⁵² These two figures were notable choices: Moscoso, the mastermind behind Puerto Rico's highly touted Operation Bootstrap, was regarded as

⁴⁸ "The Best Advice," *The Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 12, 1960, Section 5, Series 19, Cartapacio 52, FLMM; "Munoz," *The Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 9, 1960, Section 5, Series 2, Cartapacio 52, FLMM.

⁴⁹ Gustavo Agrait to Luis Muñoz Marín, January 4, 1960, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁵⁰ "Room at the Top," *The Washington Post*, June 7, 1961, Section 8: Colección Teodoro Moscoso, Series 13, Cartapacio 1092, FLMM.

⁵¹ Welch, 136.

⁵² JFK's Latin American Task Force consisted of six members, in addition to Berle and the Puerto Ricans, there was Harvard economist Lincoln Gordon, Rutgers economist Robert Alexander, and University of Pennsylvania historian Arthur Whitaker. See Latham, 208.

an expert on Latin American economic development, while Carrión had helped forge Puerto Rican-Latin American relations as the island's Under-Secretary of State.⁵³ Although a hardliner, Berle made a point of including Puerto Rican views in the critical process of developing a foreign policy plan for the new presidency. The Latin American Task Force thus served as a forum in which Latin American ideas—at least, those endorsed by the leadership of Puerto Rico—could be heard and validated by high-level figures in Washington and thus incorporated into US foreign policy.

While Muñoz himself was not part of the Task Force (nor could he be, given his duties as governor), he was kept up to date with the group's activities. In one letter to the governor, Carrión attached a copy of all of his proposed recommendations to the task force. While Carrión, like Muñoz, agreed that the United States should address Latin American affairs from a point of friendship and support for democratic change, he did not merely regard his work on the task force as a way to change US-Latin American relations, but as a way to reshape *US-Puerto Rican relations*. As part of his recommendations, Carrión called for an increased Puerto Rican presence in devising and implementing US foreign policy, which would be accomplished through the appointment of three or four Puerto Ricans to “key positions in the Federal Administration.” Carrión emphasized that the implementation of his recommendations would create “for the first time in our history, a United States policy towards Latin America to which Puerto Rico would be actively incorporated.”⁵⁴ Carrión's words suggest that there was a dual purpose to Puerto Rico's sharp interest in US foreign policy: while, as part of the so-called Democratic Left, the Muñoz administration certainly sought to promote the governments of their allies, it mainly sought to position Puerto Rico within the US

⁵³ Morales Carrión played a key role in changing Puerto Rico's State Department from an office that lent support to the governorship into a sort of foreign ministry during the 1950s, noting that despite its lack of territorial sovereignty, Puerto Rico nonetheless had “geographic, cultural, ...economic [and] ideological problems distinct to those of the United States.” For more on Morales Carrión's role in shaping the international reach of the Free Associated State, see Vélez Rodríguez, 159-170.

⁵⁴ Arturo Morales Carrión to Luis Muñoz Marín, January 9, 1960, Section 5, Series 2, Cartapacio 334, FLMM.

foreign policy apparatus. Vélez Rodríguez argues that the Cuban revolution proved to be a pivotal point for the Muñoz administration. When met with the “new international reality of a world divided into [two opposing] worldviews,” the island government abandoned its attempts at greater autonomy in its foreign relations and instead chose to reposition itself as an extension of US foreign policy.⁵⁵ As Carrión’s work in Kennedy’s Latin American task force suggests, Puerto Rico chose to align itself with the United States in the Cold War, while seeking to take on an unprecedented, enlarged role within the mainland government and ensure its own interests and views were injected into US policy decisions.



John F. Kennedy officially unveils the Alliance for Progress before Latin America’s diplomatic corps, meeting at the White House, March 13, 1961, (JFKL).

⁵⁵ Vélez Rodríguez, 351.

The task force delivered its final report on January 6, 1961, with suggestions for Kennedy's upcoming inaugural address. On March 2, 1961, Walt Rostow, an economist and political theorist upon whose advice Kennedy often relied, endorsed the task force's proposals. Kennedy officially presented the task force's advice as policy when formally unveiling the Alliance for Progress program on March 13, 1961.⁵⁶ In his speech, Kennedy framed his plan using the same (liberal democratic) revolutionary rhetoric that Muñoz had used when pushing for an Alliance-like response to Latin America's socio-economic and political situations:

“Let us once again transform the American continents into a vast crucible of revolutionary ideas and efforts—a tribute to the power of the creative energies of free men—an example to all the world that liberty and progress walk hand in hand. Let us once again awaken our American revolution until it guides the struggles of people everywhere—not with an imperialism of force or fear—but the rule of courage and freedom and hope for the future of man.”⁵⁷

While the Alliance was a US-led project first announced by Kennedy, Muñoz conveyed his ideas on US-Latin American relations, in turn influenced by his Latin American allies, to the new president. Yet while the Alliance had some origins in Latin American ideas, these ideas were implemented after being accepted by Washington's intellectual and bureaucratic circles. Muñoz's ideas made their way into US foreign policy because figures in the Washington establishment, such as Adolf Berle and Walt Rostow, embraced his views given that Kennedy was eager to pivot to less aggressive, soft power politics.

⁵⁶ Latham, 208, 211.

⁵⁷ Kennedy quoted in Plank, John N., “The Alliance for Progress: Problems and Prospects,” *Daedalus*, 91.4 (1962), 803.



John F. Kennedy with Luis Muñoz Marín in the Oval Office, July 19, 1962, White House Photographs, (JFKL).

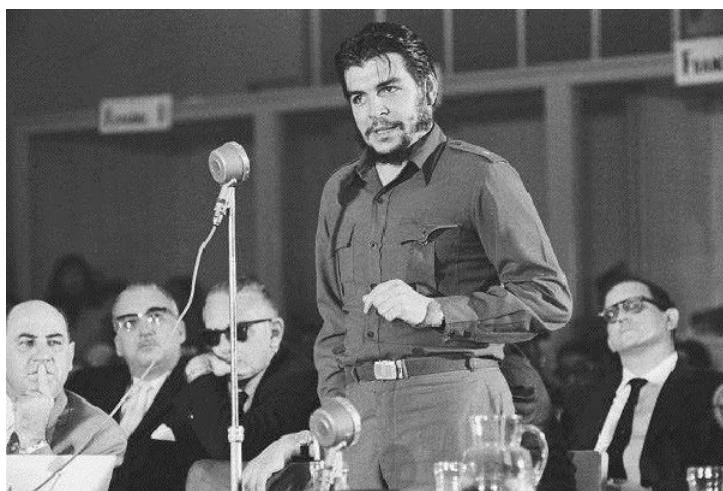
“Unmistakably of Latin American Origin?” Alliance Deliberations at Punta del Este⁵⁸

Once Kennedy officially introduced the idea of an Alliance for Progress in March 1961, his policymakers worked to assemble the ambitious program. As Taffet notes, there were many initial concerns to overcome, including a need to give the Alliance a “Latin American face.”⁵⁹ Kennedy began to obtain the Organization of American States’ support to indicate a commitment to multilateralism. In March 1961, he met with the Inter-American Development Bank’s president, Felipe Herrera, to begin discussions on how the bank would be able to provide financial support for the Alliance, followed by subsequent meetings between Herrera, Richard Goodwin (a Kennedy aide), and Lincoln

⁵⁸ Title taken from Carlos Sanz de Santamaria, address before the Special Session of the Council of the OAS, March 16, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 12, JFKL.

⁵⁹ Taffet, 29. The author notes that the initial concerns to overcome were two-pronged: the need to reflect Latin American concerns in the spirit of a true alliance, as well as US political concerns, given that funding for Alliance initiatives would come from Washington. To work effectively, the Alliance would need a nimble and effective bureaucracy and Congressional support in order to secure the massive appropriations necessary for Alliance grants and loans on the US side of the program, and strong commitment and effective policy changes on the Latin American side.

Gordon (a Task Force member) in Rio de Janeiro. There, they obtained the crucial support of Jorge Sol, the chief of Staff of IA-ECOSOC, and Raúl Prebisch, the Argentinian economist at the head of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL). The men drafted position papers in these meetings which they then used to guide the deliberations over the Alliance for Progress in Punta del Este. At the same time, Adlai Stevenson, the US Ambassador to the UN, toured Latin America in June 1961, promoting the Alliance and meeting with key government figures to discern what the Latin Americans sought from the program. Most Latin Americans understood the Alliance as a way to obtain US funds for their social programs, if they understood the program at all. The leaders aligned with the Democratic Left, on the other hand, expressed a strong interest in the Alliance's multilateral and revolutionary aspirations.⁶⁰ These leaders, desperate to maintain power when faced with political threats from both the right and left in their countries, played a key role in drafting the Alliance charter in Punta del Este. The document thus reflected the political leanings of the Democratic Left, rather than broadly-held Latin American concerns, if such views even existed.



Ernesto "Che" Guevara of Cuba at Punta del Este, a notable example of Latin American opposition to the Alliance, (FLMM).

The OAS formalized a series of meetings held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, as the summer progressed. Deliberations of an IA-ECOSOC Special Meeting began on August 5, culminating with a written Declaration

of the Peoples of America on the Alliance for Progress, approved on August 16 and signed by all

⁶⁰ Ibid., 31.

member state delegations (with the notable exception of Cuba) the following day.⁶¹ To address Adlai Stevenson's findings that many Latin Americans saw the Alliance for Progress as a way to get social programs funding, the charter provided extensive details on how aid would be granted and distributed. Each nation would be responsible for writing up their grant proposals, subject to review by a nine-member panel of experts appointed by the Inter-American Development Bank, UN Economic Commission for Latin America, and the Secretary-General of the OAS. This panel of experts, known as the Wise Men, would send the proposals they deemed to be in accord with the ideals of Punta del Este for review by the "governments and institutions" granting aid. These proposals would target mainly the US government, the economic powerhouse that pledged its assistance in helping its fellow American states in reaching and complying with Alliance expectations, but also the Inter-American Development Bank and hopefully other major global financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank).⁶² The delegations drafting the Alliance charter hoped that the program would become truly multilateral and international. While the United States, given its economic might and Kennedy's professed desires to reverse the tensions from the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies, would always play a key role in the program, the OAS delegates wanted the impetus for change to come from Latin America, which could also look to international organizations as a source of financial support.

The charter presented ambitious development goals, most notably the goal of every Latin American nation achieving a yearly 2.5% per capita rate of growth. Other goals included: a ten-year education program that would facilitate the elimination of adult illiteracy and a ten-year public health program that aimed to provide clean water and sewage services to urban and rural areas.⁶³ While the

⁶¹ US Department of State press release, August 16, 1961, Section 5, Series 1, Cartapacio 10, FLMM.

⁶² Charter of Punta del Este, Teodoro Moscoso Personal Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

⁶³ Organization of American States, Resolutions of the Special Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council at the Ministerial Level, August 17, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

charter laid out a few specific goals, it generally failed to provide the countries of Latin America with the institutional mechanisms needed to implement many of the document's common aspirations. More than an intentional lack of oversight, however, this decision demonstrates how deliberations were more focused on the Alliance's *outcomes* rather than the measures needed to achieve such results. Raúl Sáez Sáez, a Chilean minister who served as chairman on the Alliance's panel of experts, maintained that the Alliance charter served as "a new type of [social contract] that acknowledges the need for and tries to establish a new mode of international coexistence."⁶⁴ The charter emphasizes the Alliance's ideological nature: the delegations at Punta del Este professed a desire to respect the sovereignty of Latin American nations to devise their own developmental policy, and encouraged each nation to "formulate comprehensive and well-conceived national programs for the development of their own economies" on their own, as "the[ir] contribution...to the Alliance for Progress."⁶⁵

The delegates at Punta del Este saw their work as a way to usher in a new era of hemispheric relations, where the United States would serve as an ally in the region's pursuit of social and economic development. Bearing the title of "Declaration of the Peoples of Americas," a rhetorical connection to the Enlightenment-era revolutions that established many of the countries of the Western hemisphere as independent nations, the charter suggested that the Alliance for Progress was a neoliberal reimagining of US-Latin American relations, in which all of the charter's signatories were committed "to improve and strengthen democratic institutions" within their own countries and through their support of their fellow American nations. The charter's preamble ends with the line,

"The ideas reflected in this document point to the magnitude of the content of the approved resolutions, the texts of which constitute the only source that should be referred to in applying the concepts of which compromise the establishment of an Alliance for Progress."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Raúl Sáez S., "The Nine Wise Men and the Alliance for Progress," *International Organization*, 22.1 (1968), 253.

⁶⁵ US Department of State press release, August 16, 1961, Section 5, Series 1, Cartapacio 10, FLMM.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

The Alliance for Progress was thus born of a series of shared ideas intended to guide how countries responded to their own internal socioeconomic concerns and related to each other in addressing them.

Yet throughout the conference, both the “extreme” right and left joined to stop the charter’s implementation: reactionaries saw the Alliance for Progress as utopian, unrealistic, and menacing to the power they enjoyed, whereas the Marxists saw it as an instrument of US imperialism over Latin America, merely repackaged and sold under alleged values of pan-Americanism and progressive reform.⁶⁷ The underlying question at Punta del Este, therefore, was *whom* in Latin America the charter aimed to represent, given that both ends of the political spectrum felt hostility towards the ideas discussed at Punta del Este. The Alliance charter, at best, spoke to the desires of leaders aligned with the Democratic Left and the United States.

*“Nice to Have Local Talent Recognized:” Moscoso at the head of the Alliance*⁶⁸

Kennedy chose Teodoro Moscoso, a key lieutenant of the PPD, to lead the Alliance for Progress, a role which Moscoso used to represent both Washington’s and San Juan’s views in US foreign policy. Although Moscoso saw himself as a stranger to the “Washington jungle,” (which indeed he was, given that prior to the 1960s his political work was confined to Puerto Rico), he had also been considered an obvious nomination for the role in the Alliance, given his extensive experience in developmental work. Moscoso created and ran Fomento, the Puerto Rican Economic Development Administration, which Kennedy economic advisor Harvey Perloff praised as “the most successful government development corporation in the Western Hemisphere.”⁶⁹ Moscoso, capitalizing on the tax incentives that Puerto Rico’s unique political status within the United States offered to US-based

⁶⁷ Frei Montalva, 404.

⁶⁸ Title taken from “Moscoso Named to Head Alliance,” *The San Juan Star*, November 7, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

⁶⁹ Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, xiii.

investors, used Fomento to facilitate the arrival of US private capital investment to bolster the development of an export-oriented, industrial island.⁷⁰ According to Ayala and Bernabé, Moscoso, through Operation Bootstrap, did more to influence the vision of a “modern” Puerto Rico than any other PPD leader, including Muñoz, who at the time was credited with Bootstrap’s success.⁷¹ Moscoso’s work in both “developing” and “modernizing” Puerto Rico thus made him an attractive figure, as the United States hoped to implement a similar “development” and “modernization” of Latin America as a whole. One of the most remarkable aspects of Operation Bootstrap, a plan whose very name alludes to a well-known metaphor for the American dream of being self-made, is that it replaced earlier plans for economic development on the island that were considered “too socialistic” and, through its emphasis on private capital, market integration, and economic openness, directed Puerto Rico towards a capitalist future. Operation Bootstrap seemed to have warded off socialism and nationalism in Puerto Rico in the 1940s and 1950s, binding the island to the US economically just as the new status, the ELA, bound it politically.⁷² That Operation Bootstrap represented a type of “non-nationalistic economic development,” argues historian Deborah Berman Santana, only made Moscoso’s vision even more attractive to Washington, which hoped to maintain the same hegemonic control over Latin America that it refused to relinquish in Puerto Rico.⁷³

While Moscoso officially worked as a member of the United States’ foreign service, his position at the head of the US side of the Alliance for Progress required him to represent the interests and needs of Washington as well as those of Latin America, due to the Alliance’s emphasis on multilateralism and pan-Americanism evoked by the charter. Moscoso took his job seriously when it came to being a spokesperson for Latin America within the foreign policy of the United States.

⁷⁰ Ayala and Bernabé, 190.

⁷¹ Ibid., 180.

⁷² Santana, 110-111; Ayala and Bernabé, 201.

⁷³ Santana, 104.

Writing to a journalist with *The Reporter*, Moscoso urged the magazine's editor to "not forget Latin America" in its work and expressed concern, just as Muñoz did, over Washington's tendency to prioritize Cold War rivalries over the actual region of Latin America and its concerns beyond communism and containment: "As the saying goes around here, it takes a Castro to focus the attention of the United States Government and its press on Latin America."⁷⁴ Fellow members of the diplomatic corps, with many more years of experience in the field, heralded Moscoso's appointment to the Alliance for Progress as a great success, precisely because of Moscoso's ability to amplify Latin American concerns: Jim Loeb, US Ambassador to Peru, noted how his entire staff in Lima felt "renewed hope" in seeing Moscoso lead the program.⁷⁵ Members of the US diplomatic corps throughout Latin America, as well as pro-US, liberal Latin American politicians welcomed Moscoso's appointment as a gesture on behalf of the United States that Washington would begin to listen to Latin American voices and concerns while conducting its foreign policy.⁷⁶ Yet if Moscoso represented Latin America in Washington, he represented a singular thread of Latin American political thought: the moderate, liberal, pro-democratic and pro-capitalist ideologies that Moscoso himself and his Democratic Left allies embraced.

Moscoso also regarded himself as a representative of Puerto Rico and the PPD. His appointment to lead the Alliance fulfilled the recommendation Carrión had included in the Kennedy Task Force final report: to appoint Puerto Ricans to high level positions in the foreign policy wing of the federal government.⁷⁷ Moscoso's potential to influence US foreign policy and implement decisions that aligned more with Muñoz's and the Democratic Left's social development goals than with

⁷⁴ Teodoro Moscoso to Douglas Cater, October 23, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁷⁵ James Loeb to Teodoro Moscoso, November 7, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁷⁶ Hugo Martin, "Moscoso's Appointment Augurs Well for Alianza para el Progreso," Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁷⁷ Morales Carrión himself would join Moscoso in the US foreign service as Kennedy's Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.

Washington's anti-Castro Cold War concerns did not escape Muñoz's notice. A day after Moscoso's appointment, Heriberto Alonso, Muñoz's executive assistant, wrote to him, suggesting that he send a written plan concerning how to "more effectively utilize the means we have in Puerto Rico to cooperate in Latin America's development" to Muñoz.⁷⁸ Muñoz already had the president's ear: in addition to his role in influencing Kennedy's decision to follow through with the Alliance, Muñoz had convinced the president to support free elections in the Dominican Republic, leading to the electoral victory of a fellow Democratic Left statesman.⁷⁹ If Muñoz could wield such influence from San Juan, he expected Moscoso, a member of the Kennedy administration, to play an even greater role in promoting both Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican views in US-Latin American affairs.



Teodoro Moscoso, photographed for Revista Colegial, Moscoso Collection, (FLMM).

⁷⁸ Heriberto Alonso to Teodoro Moscoso, November 8, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Box 5, JFKL, and Taffet, 34.

⁷⁹ Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, September 20, 1961, Muñoz Papers, Cartapacio 3, FLMM. For more on how Muñoz Marín contributed to Kennedy's decision to support free elections in the Dominican Republic following the assassination of dictator Rafael Trujillo (rather than backing the rise to power of the late strongman's vice president), see: Bonilla-Carlo, Walter R., *La Revolución Dominicana de 1965 y la participación de Puerto Rico*, (San Juan: Publicaciones Puertorriqueñas, 2005).

Part II: Puerto Rican Ambassadors

For Muñoz, a Puerto Rican presence within the Alliance not only realized PPD foreign policy aims to help Latin American allies, but legitimized the PPD government and the island's contested political status. After the establishment of the *Estado Libre Asociado* in 1952, Muñoz's PPD had to fight a two-fronted battle. It had to convince opponents, both within Puerto Rico and abroad, that the "commonwealth" was a non-colonial project, a democratically-chosen form of autonomy within the greater United States.⁸⁰ At the same time, Muñoz tried to wrestle as much control from Congress, which under the ELA retained plenary powers over the island, to increase Puerto Rican autonomy without directly confronting the United States.⁸¹ Historian Angel Rivera Rivera argues that the PPD's ELA would be legitimized by the approval and recognition of both the metropolis and Latin America.⁸² This tension over two visions of Puerto Rico—a "decolonized" island eager to demonstrate its autonomy vs. an island eager to finesse greater autonomy—underlay the formation of the PPD's foreign policy. Following Muñoz's assertion that the ELA had lifted the colonial weight off of Puerto Rico, the PPD began to create a foreign policy that allied itself with the Democratic Left and opposed Latin America's military dictatorships. Throughout the 1950s, the PPD cultivated alliances with democratic leaders, ties which the PPD then used as a leverage to gain influence over US foreign policy in the Alliance. Like its Democratic Left allies, the PPD had internal enemies to ward off: nationalist and pro-independence groups which vehemently opposed the PPD's two signature policies, the ELA and Operation Bootstrap. Having isolated these opponents in the 1950s, with the help of Democratic Left allies, the PPD hoped to use the Alliance to further promote itself and its political projects.⁸³

⁸⁰ José Trías Monge, *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 120

⁸¹ Ayala and Bernabé, 162.

⁸² Rivera Rivera, 159.

⁸³ Vélez Rodríguez, 232, Ayala and Bernabé, 162.

*“Mr. Bootstrap Becomes Mr. Ambassador:” Moscoso in Venezuela*⁸⁴

Before the Alliance for Progress was set up, Moscoso served as US Ambassador to Venezuela, a position which he used to promote the PPD and its goals throughout Latin America. Moscoso first encountered Senator Kennedy, alongside other Democratic Party presidential hopefuls, at a state dinner held by Muñoz at La Fortaleza in 1960, despite the fact that the governor had requested PPD officials to refrain themselves from attending an event for candidates of national elections.⁸⁵ For all of his work in masterminding Operation Bootstrap, Moscoso did not have the same strong ties to Washington that Muñoz had first cultivated during the devastating decade of the 1930s and maintained throughout his governorship. Although Moscoso had drafted letters defending Operation Bootstrap to the Massachusetts senator on the Puerto Rican governor’s behalf in the late 1950s, he recalled having had no other interactions with Kennedy.⁸⁶ Moscoso’s “first contact” with the nation’s capital, according to his recollection, occurred in March 1961, when he was invited for a “brief interview” to discuss his candidacy for the post of US Ambassador to Venezuela—a position Moscoso had neither applied for, nor known he was being considered for.⁸⁷

Moscoso may have understated his connections and experience, however. As a member of the Berle-led Latin American task force, he had already tallied up basic exposure to the bureaucracy of the White House. Moreover, he would have been aware of the contents of the task force’s final report to the president, which listed Latin American countries of high concern to the administration along with

⁸⁴ Title taken from an article on Moscoso’s appointment. Harold Underhill, “‘Mr. Bootstrap’ Becomes ‘Mr. Ambassador,’” *The Diplomat*, June 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

⁸⁵ Teodoro Moscoso, recorded interview by Leigh Miller, May 18, 1964 (1-2), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

⁸⁶ Lapp, 180.

⁸⁷ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 3-4. The letters Moscoso referred to came from Massachusetts labor unions, who had written to Senator Kennedy in opposition to the concessions the US government gave to Puerto Rico under Operation Bootstrap and as agreed upon by the conditions of Puerto Rico’s Commonwealth status. Among those concessions, geared towards incentivizing private (US) investment, are generous tax exemptions, special loans, a cheap labor force, and industrial plants and infrastructure built to the specifications of US investors. Moscoso argued that Puerto Rican economic development necessitated the use of all legal inducements and incentives.

suggested measures to mitigate US concerns. At the top of the list of countries “at risk” that required an immediate US response was Venezuela: the task force report stressed that the administration should act quickly to appoint a competent ambassador to the country to assist President Rómulo Betancourt in securing his government amidst widespread leftist opposition.⁸⁸ Kennedy’s desire to respond to Latin America’s potential communist contagion—a viable outcome in Betancourt’s Venezuela—provides an explanation as to why he tapped Moscoso, a (relative) Washington outsider, for that crucial position: his personal and political connections with the Venezuelan president, who had spent his political exile in San Juan, and his expertise as the architect behind Operation Bootstrap. Moscoso’s appointment would ideally allow for him to recreate his Puerto Rican success throughout the areas of Latin America at risk of succumbing to communism.



*John F.
Kennedy
with
Teodoro
Moscoso,
May 2,
1961,
(JFKL).*

⁸⁸ Latin American Task Force, Final Report to John F. Kennedy, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 9, JFKL.

Moscoso understood that his role as US Ambassador to Venezuela had important implications for the Alliance for Progress as an ideological push to “complete the revolution of the Americas—to build a hemisphere where all men can hope for the same high standard of living and all can live out their lives in dignity and freedom.” In accepting his candidacy to replace Edward J. Sparks, US Ambassador to Venezuela at the time, Moscoso wrote to Kennedy’s Under-secretary of State:

“But as a United States citizen of Latin origin I cannot help but respond intellectually and emotionally to the President’s call for an ‘Alianza para el Progreso,’ ...if it is felt that I can be of service to this great cause, I can only deem it a privilege and honor to be given the opportunity to serve. Accordingly, I should like to offer myself as a candidate for appointment.”⁸⁹

Moscoso thus understood the value of his position as ambassador to the Alliance for Progress, even though there was no explicit link between his ambassadorship and the program that Kennedy had just announced. After starting his official duties in May, Moscoso informed the president that the “‘Alianza para el Progreso’ is open for business in Venezuela” and that he was willing to participate in the Inter-American Economic and Social Council (IA-ECOSOC) meeting scheduled for July 15 in Montevideo, Uruguay.⁹⁰ The meeting, hosted by one of the key branches of the Organization of American States, was convened to take all the existing ideas in favor of an alliance for progress and formulate them into a multinational accord. While Moscoso did not join the US delegation to the meeting (as he was “needed in Venezuela at the time”), he still followed the deliberations and final decisions over the Alliance for Progress in Uruguay closely from his office in Caracas.⁹¹ In his duties as ambassador, Moscoso supported the spirit and goals of the Alliance.⁹²

Indeed, many of the duties Moscoso attended as ambassador in Venezuela were related to issues that the Alliance for Progress would later address on a regional scale. Moscoso developed a keen

⁸⁹ Teodoro Moscoso to Chester Bowles, March 22, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹⁰ Teodoro Moscoso to Chester Bowles, May 18, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹¹ Letters between Teodoro Moscoso and Robert Solo, September 27, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

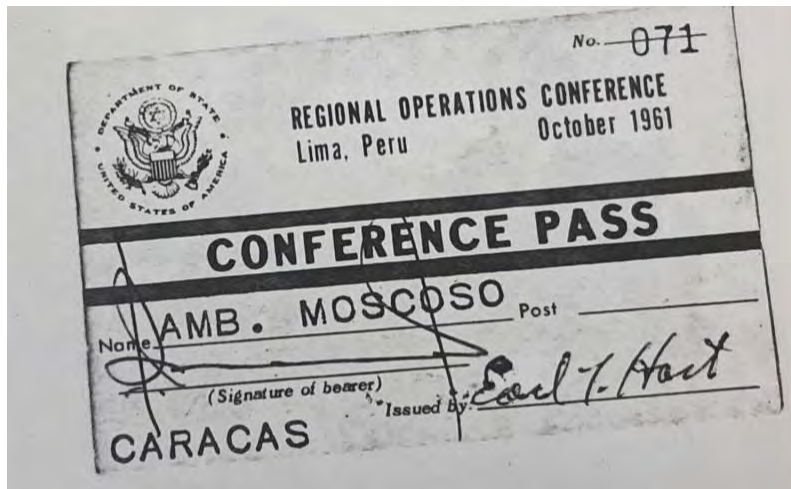
⁹² Chester Bowles to Teodoro Moscoso, May 26, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

interest in the issue of capital flight in Venezuela, a problem that the Alliance would repeatedly address regarding foreign investment in Latin America.⁹³ Moscoso, a long believer in fueling development through private US capital (in the case of Puerto Rico and Operation Bootstrap), closely studied VIASA, the Venezuelan airline, and took measures to encourage the company to seek private investment. When the company chose to switch to 45% private ownership, he encouraged VIASA to seek US funding.⁹⁴ He also studied foreign aid (again, another central concept for the Alliance) in Venezuela, evaluating the economic effects of delayed additional aid on Venezuela.⁹⁵ Moscoso sketched out ideas for a technical assistance program in Venezuela with Henry Labouisse, a US career diplomat who at the time served as Director of the International Cooperation Administration.⁹⁶ Moscoso had seen the execution of successful technical assistance programs in Puerto Rico while

working with the PPD, and believed that similar programs could be applied to Venezuela.⁹⁷

Teodoro Moscoso's pass for the Fourth Regional Operations Conference in Peru, October 1961, (JFKL).

Throughout his time in the US foreign service, Moscoso sought to replicate his successes under



Operation Bootstrap. Moscoso's stint as ambassador can be seen as a way to reconcile his experience

⁹³ Teodoro Moscoso to George D. Woods, Chairman of the First Boston Corporation, September 13, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹⁴ Teodoro Moscoso to George D. Woods, October 3, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹⁵ Moscoso, Teodoro and Carl F. Norden, "Economic Effect on Venezuela of Delay in Getting Additional Aid," Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹⁶ Teodoro Moscoso to Henry Labouisse, June 20, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL. The ICA was in service until September 1961, when it was abolished by an act of Congress and its functions transferred over to the newly created US Agency for International Development (USAID).

⁹⁷ For more on Puerto Rico's technical assistance programs, such as Point Four and the Caribbean Commission, see Vélez Rodríguez, chapters 1 and 2.

with the exact type of economic development desirable to the US with his unfamiliarity with the way politics were run in Washington—a crash course in foreign affairs where he could develop his diplomatic *modus operandi* before he could be moved on to his real purpose in the ambitious Alliance project.

Additionally, Moscoso understood that his role in Caracas represented an opportunity for Puerto Rico to expand its presence in US foreign policy and provide assistance to the PPD's political aims. To help the PPD's political allies, Moscoso frequently updated Muñoz on the situation in Venezuela and the “critical problems of our Venezuelan friend.”⁹⁸ Moscoso found it necessary to use his role as US Ambassador to defend the ELA before Latin American skeptics who believed Puerto Rico remained a US colony, despite the PPD's assertions that the new status had “wip[ed Puerto Rico's] slate clean” in regard to US relations.⁹⁹ In a letter to Muñoz, Moscoso emphasized his conviction that it was crucial to “demonstrate in Latin America that Puerto Rico remains a nation of Hispanic culture” and to “destroy the communist propaganda...that the United States has destroyed our culture.”¹⁰⁰ Muñoz certainly was concerned that Castro, after his refusal to join the Democratic Left, and his “Communist bloc” would criticize “the attitude of the United States toward Puerto Rico and its people” as a colonial one, despite the PPD's assertion that the island's colonial status was a thing of the past.¹⁰¹ While the PPD had managed to convince its Democratic Left allies that it was no longer a colonial entity under the US, the events of the Cuban Revolution inspired many critics of the PPD to pen articles disparaging Puerto Rican involvement in the Alliance.¹⁰² Though it is difficult to discern how criticism from “Castro-Cubans” would have seriously hurt the PPD at the height of its

⁹⁸ Teodoro Moscoso to Luis Muñoz Marín, April 7, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

⁹⁹ Carmelo Esterrich, *Concrete and Countryside: The Urban and the Rural in 1950s Puerto Rican Culture*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018), 29.

¹⁰⁰ Teodoro Moscoso to Luis Muñoz Marín, October 23, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

¹⁰¹ Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, December 28, 1961, Muñoz Collection, Series 1, FLMM.

¹⁰² Leo Cherne (Executive Director, Research Institute of America) to Teodoro Moscoso, December 1, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

power, Muñoz was eager to squash all criticism of his government and its political decisions.¹⁰³ Moscoso thus dedicated a significant portion of his first press conference as US ambassador—an “outstandingly successful” event according to all major Venezuelan newspapers—to explaining the ELA’s relationship with the US, despite the fact that Kennedy’s task force’s final report reveals his true



purpose: to provide diplomatic assistance to Betancourt, a liberal president under threat of communist-inspired revolution. By presenting the PPD’s official view of Puerto Rico’s status, Moscoso hoped to counteract the negative views propagated by “communist propaganda.”¹⁰⁴ In Venezuela, Moscoso officially carried the title of US Ambassador, yet he was also effectively an ambassador for Puerto Rico.

US Ambassador to the UN Adlai Stevenson, Gloria Moscoso, and Teodoro Moscoso, US Embassy in Venezuela, June 1961.

“Going to Bat for Puerto Rico!” Puerto Ricans in the Alliance¹⁰⁵

Luis Muñoz Marín maintained vigilance over the Alliance for Progress from La Fortaleza, despite his lack of direct involvement with the project. While Muñoz considered Moscoso and Carrión’s appointments to the upper echelons of the US foreign service to be a victory for the island,

¹⁰³ Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, December 28, 1961, Muñoz Collection, Series 1, FLMM.

¹⁰⁴ “Mr. Moscoso and the Press,” *The Daily Journal* (Caracas), May 26, 1961; “La democracia es difícil pero vale la pena,” *El Nacional* (Caracas), May 26, 1961; “Rueda de prensa con Moscoso: Una Solución Hemisférica para el Problema Cubano,” *La Esfera* (Caracas), May 26, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 4, JFKL.

¹⁰⁵ Title taken from Teodoro Moscoso to Leo Cherne, December 15, 1961, Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

he urged Moscoso to make sure there was also a strong Puerto Rican presence among his staff. Moscoso responded in the affirmative, noting that by late 1962, 147 Puerto Ricans were employed in the State Department as Alliance for Progress staff members in some capacity. Moscoso suggested that the governor publicize this information to help both the Alliance for Progress and Puerto Rico, suggesting that the PPD hoped to cultivate a public image of the Alliance as an important Puerto Rican project.¹⁰⁶ Moscoso nonetheless faced certain restrictions in giving his staff a Puerto Rican makeover: for example, his deputies, the non-Puerto Ricans William Rogers and Graham Martin, were Kennedy appointees. Although Moscoso tried to integrate more Puerto Ricans into the Alliance, a task which he certainly accomplished if one merely looks at the number of Puerto Ricans working in his office, the Alliance for Progress remained a US program, with its office located in Washington, D.C, and with the highest positions awarded by presidential appointment. Moscoso did, however, integrate PPD officials and key insular leaders as “consultants,” allowing them to provide their expertise and assist Moscoso nonetheless. Among these consultants were businessmen Samuel Badillo, Rafael Carrión, and Roberto de Jesús Toro, and former PPD Secretary of the Treasury Sol Luis Descartes.¹⁰⁷

Moscoso also sought to incorporate Puerto Ricans into the Alliance by counting on his connections back home to assist him in managing the program. In July 1962, he gathered a team consisting of Rafael Carrión, President of Puerto Rico’s Banco Popular, Samuel Badillo, head of a Puerto Rican publications firm, and Roberto de Jesús Toro, head of the Banco de Ponce, to travel on a mission to Peru, Chile, and Argentina. There, the team gathered information on those countries’

¹⁰⁶ Teodoro Moscoso to Luis Muñoz Marín, November 20, 1962; Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL. Note: the author did not find any documents in the archives to give insight into how Muñoz used the information Moscoso sent regarding the number of Puerto Rican staffers in the Alliance.

¹⁰⁷ USAID Staffing Pattern and Personnel Roster, as of July 15, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 1, Box 1, JFKL.

political and economic situation and delivered a report to Moscoso.¹⁰⁸ This group of men also contributed to Moscoso's thinking about the Alliance. In a report called "Stability—Basis of the Alliance," Toro suggested that the Alliance work to "create investor conditions of investor confidence which will draw massive private capital into the economies of Latin America."¹⁰⁹ Moscoso, a long-time champion of private investment (in the case of Puerto Rico as a recipient of US investment under Operation Bootstrap), hoped to translate the practice to the Alliance, so that Latin American governments could attract investment as a way to meet the goals they had pledged to at Punta del Este. In addition to Toro's report, Moscoso corresponded with Rafael Picó, another of Muñoz's closest advisors who served the PPD as the chairman of Puerto Rico's Planning Board, and Rafael Durand, Moscoso's successor at Fomento, on ways to boost private investment in Latin America. Moscoso also hoped to coordinate visits with Fomento, so that Latin American functionaries could observe how Fomento operated to attract investment in Puerto Rico.¹¹⁰ These Puerto Rican connections were crucial in helping Moscoso formulate strategies for the Alliance.

"Showcase of the Caribbean:" Modernization Theory in the Alliance

Modernization theory in the 1960s, which regarded progress as a linear development of interdependent economic, political, and social changes, played a key role in shaping the Alliance for Progress.¹¹¹ Historian Carmelo Esterrich notes that the 1940s and 1950s in Puerto Rico also consisted of a PPD-sponsored "modernization frenzy:" modernization through industrialization (to be

¹⁰⁸ Teodoro Moscoso to Rafael Carrión, July 1962; Teodoro Moscoso to Samuel Badillo, July 9, 1962; Teodoro Moscoso to Roberto de Jesús Toro, July 16, 1962; Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL.

¹⁰⁹ Teodoro Moscoso to Roberto de Jesús Toro, April 11, 1962, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL.

¹¹⁰ Teodoro Moscoso to Rafael Picó, April 23, 1963; Teodoro Moscoso to Rafael Durand, February 4, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL.

¹¹¹ Taffet, 21. Taffet attributes modernization theory to a community of academics known as the Charles River group, based out of MIT's Center for International Studies. The most prominent of these thinkers was Walt Rostow, who endorsed the Alliance for Progress as proposed to Kenny by his Latin American Task Force.

accomplished under Operation Bootstrap) and modernization through a political transformation of the relationship between the US and Puerto Rico (to be accomplished under the ELA).¹¹² Muñoz and Moscoso thus hoped to use the Alliance for Progress to demonstrate how Puerto Rico aligned with the modernization theory that the Kennedy administration embraced and hoped to apply to Latin America, rendering Puerto Rico a “showcase of the Caribbean” to the hemisphere.¹¹³ The modernization project thus required a rigorous marketing campaign to promote “modern” societies and demonstrate to underdeveloped nations how to “modernize.

For this reason, the Alliance was highly-publicized, enjoying a distinct logo, varied forms of



propaganda (such as anti-communist comic books geared towards Latin American children), and wide media coverage—efforts undertaken in the hopes that heightened visibility of increased US aid to a region historically neglected by US budget allocations would “engender a positive demonstration effect.”¹¹⁴ The Alliance entailed a vigorous public relations

campaign that aimed to reclaim the revolutionary image—at the time more strongly associated with the Soviet Union, Fidel Castro, militancy, nationalism, and communism—as a liberal, democratic, and capitalist movement.¹¹⁵ As historian Kevin Young notes, the Cuban Revolution necessitated the United States’ urgent need to ensure Latin American cooperation and partnership; thus, while overarching US goals for the region did not change significantly, new tactics and strategies came into play. The United States aimed to present what Young calls “a people’s capitalism:” a version of US political values palatable to a Latin America clamoring for change and eager for revolution.¹¹⁶ Hence,

¹¹² Esterrich, 25, 29. There was a third “operation” after Bootstrap and the ELA project: Operation Serenity, through

¹¹³ Esterrich, 9.

¹¹⁴ Robert M. Smetherman and Bobbie Smetherman, “The Alliance for Progress: Promises Unfulfilled,” *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 31.1 (1972), 79.

¹¹⁵ Plank, 801.

¹¹⁶ Kevin A. Young, *Blood of the Earth: Resource Nationalism, Revolution, and Empire in Bolivia*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017), 97.

the Alliance charter's rhetorical allusions to the language of the 18th and 19th century revolutions that had shaped the nations of the Western hemisphere. The statesmen who had a stake in the Alliance's developmental and modernization plan (i.e., members of the Kennedy administration and the Democratic Left) appropriated—and misappropriated—the rhetoric of the Enlightenment Era-inspired revolution to promote the idea that change and reform were compatible with capitalism and liberal democracy.

Contemporaries understood the Alliance as a moderate response to the growing prevalence of leftist thought throughout Latin America. In the words of political scientist John Plank, the Alliance was “conceived as a program of *controlled revolution*: it [was] to be a continental effort directed toward the deliberate, thorough, and rapid transformation of nineteen Latin American societies.”¹¹⁷ The battle for “progress” in Latin America was ultimately ideological, concerned just as much with “image and identity” as it was with actual policy, if not more. The United States was keen to win over developing nations to its vision of modernity, which mid-twentieth century social scientists identified with the hallmarks of US society.¹¹⁸ To do so, the United States had to firmly align itself with the Latin American political ideology that most closely resembled its own: that of the Democratic Left, a movement of pro-US, pro-capitalist, and pro-democracy leaders who had come to see Luis Muñoz Marín as their symbolic leader. Moscoso's leadership within the Alliance, as a key figure of the PPD, suggested to like-minded Latin Americans that the US would take into consideration the Democratic Left's concerns when implementing its foreign aid program. Moscoso's appointment at the forefront of the Alliance was therefore another publicity stunt, the fortuitous joining of the man behind the

¹¹⁷ Plank, 800.

¹¹⁸ Latham, 214.

supposed “most striking example in the world today [of economic development]” with a program large enough to spur similar changes throughout Latin America.¹¹⁹

Muñoz and Moscoso also tried to capitalize on Cold War tensions regarding the Cuban Revolution to consolidate the PPD’s project of a “modern” Puerto Rico. Indeed, Moscoso was more than just an instrument in the United States’ battle over its public image: he came to Washington already with extensive experience in refashioning Puerto Rico’s image and identity as a key member of its first freely-elected native ruling party. As director of Fomento, Moscoso had full administrative oversight of the activities undertaken under Operation Bootstrap, which he used in crafting the Fomento brand. Fomento was heavily preoccupied with engineering Puerto Rico’s image, to transform the island from the once maligned “Poorhouse of the Caribbean” to a modern, industrialized society.¹²⁰ Historian Dennis Merrill notes that this “reinvention” of Puerto Rico under Operation Bootstrap relied upon a media campaign to convey “an image of a proud, self-confident island embracing economic and cultural modernity.”¹²¹ Moscoso’s ability to bring in prominent economists and developmental theorists to Puerto Rico legitimized Puerto Rico’s industrial development strategy before academic and development circles in the United States and abroad, while his partnership with David Ogilvy, advertising tycoon, promoted and sold Bootstrap and the “new” Puerto Rico to both potential investors and the general public.¹²² With Moscoso at the helm of the Alliance for Progress, Washington hoped to not only send a message to potential allies across Latin America of their commitment to the multilateral partnership the program alleged to stand for, but to ensure that Moscoso could replicate his successes with Operation Bootstrap on a larger, regional scale.

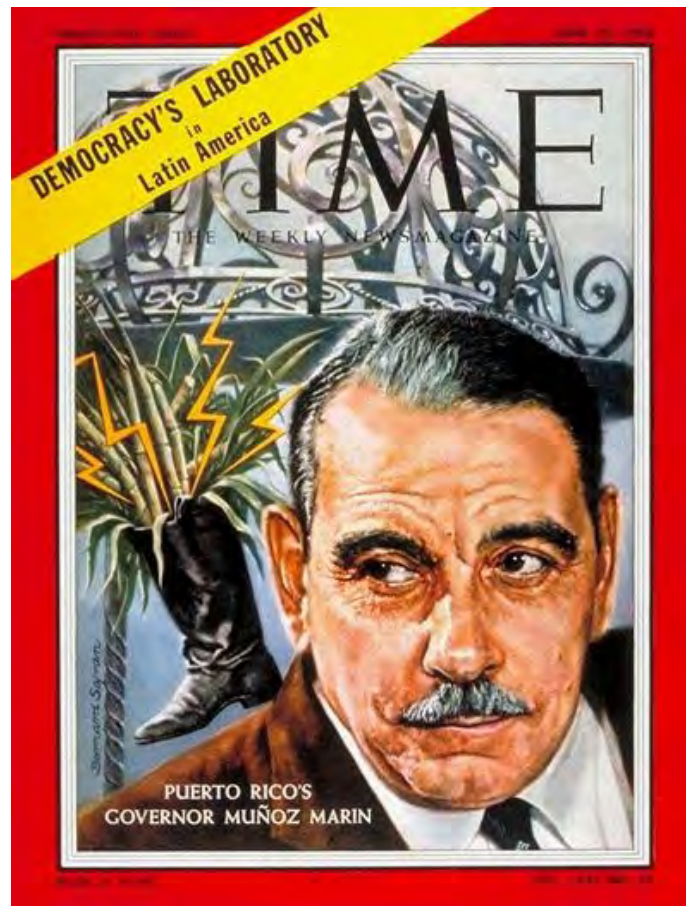
¹¹⁹ Bédard, 405.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 407.

¹²¹ Dennis Merrill, “Negotiating Cold War Paradise: U.S. Tourism, Economic Planning, and Cultural Modernity in Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico,” *Diplomatic History*, 25.2 (2001), 193-94.

¹²² Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 89-90; Esterrich, 27.

As for the PPD, it hoped that Moscoso's leadership in the Alliance would further cement Puerto Rico's status as a development model for the rest of Latin America.



Luis Muñoz Marín on the cover of TIME Magazine, in a feature titled "Democracy's Laboratory in Latin America," June 23, 1958, (TIME Digital Archives).

Part III: The Alliance Progresses, 1962-1964

Despite the PPD's strong ideological and political attachment to the Alliance for Progress, the program was ultimately a United States-led program, with Washington (and especially Congress) determining how the Alliance would progress. George Cabot Lodge, Assistant Secretary of Labor for International Affairs, noted that Alliance development projects throughout Latin America consisted of building public infrastructure in collaboration with the local government, financing public housing projects and vocational training programs, introducing new industry and technology, using funds appropriated and set aside for Alliance use by Congress.¹²³ Once Congress had determined how much money would go to the Alliance, Moscoso's office assumed responsibility over managing the disbursement of US funds to support Alliance programs throughout Latin America. The Alliance for Progress, i.e., Moscoso's office, was essentially seen as one of the recently formed US Agency for International Development's four regional bureaus.¹²⁴ To maintain the appearance of a multilateral partnership, Latin American nations were encouraged to report to IA-ECOSOC the political reforms and social welfare programs they were undertaking, or planned to undertake, where the panel of experts, the nine-member body created by the Charter of Punta del Este to review national development programs, then looked over these individual plans to determine whether they were in line with the goals professed by the charter. Moscoso took an interest in particular initiatives, such as the promotion of private investment as the engine fueling economic development. Increasingly aware that the Alliance for Progress did not resemble an equal partnership, Moscoso became a champion of increased multilateralism within the Alliance through the establishment of the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress.

¹²³ George C. Lodge, "U.S. Aid to Latin America: Funding Radical Change," *Foreign Affairs*, 47.4 (1969), 738.

¹²⁴ "Slow Progress for Alliance," *Business Abroad*, March 1962, Moscoso Collection, Serie 13, Cartapacio 1092, FLMM.

“Fomentarian Revolution:” Business and the Alliance

As director of the Alliance, Moscoso became a vocal proponent of the role of business and private enterprise in driving the economic might behind Alliance reforms. Since 1947, when Puerto Rico’s Operation Bootstrap took off with the help of private investment from the mainland United States, he had been a staunch defender of development by way of private capital. Yet the Alliance had a different relationship to business than Operation Bootstrap: historian Stephen Rabe notes that in developing the Alliance for Progress and other US foreign economic policies, the Kennedy administration largely ignored the interests of the business community. Businessmen and business advisory groups became staunch opponents of the Alliance, arguing that national development plans, such as land reform, undermined private enterprise.¹²⁵ Reports on the Alliance confirmed that a year into its existence, net gain across Latin America from private investors was negligible.¹²⁶ As Moscoso hoped to use the Alliance for Progress as a way to display Puerto Rico’s developmental model before the rest of the Western hemisphere, he began to champion the role of the direct investment of private, foreign companies in contributing to development across Latin America, along with the support of Edwin Martin, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.¹²⁷ Moscoso hoped to inspire a “fomentarian revolution”—a term coined by economist Kenneth Boulding in an article praising Operation Bootstrap—across Latin America. A key tenet of this “fomentarian revolution,” (i.e., of Bootstrap-style development) was the ability to attract and hold foreign capital.¹²⁸

Moscoso thus exerted a great deal of time and energy in courting private industry, both United States and Latin American industry, to become contributors to the Alliance for Progress. Moscoso

¹²⁵ Stephen Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 166.

¹²⁶ David L. Graham, “What Progress in the Alliance?” *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 39.4 (1963), 563.

¹²⁷ John Scott, “How Much Progress?,” Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

¹²⁸ A.W. Maldonado, *Luis Muñoz Marín: Puerto Rico’s Democratic Revolution*, (San Juan: Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006), 283.

reached out to connections at Chase Manhattan Bank to find a way to incentivize US business to invest in Latin America.¹²⁹ He won over David Rockefeller, the bank's president, who organized at least two separate symposiums for business leaders to gather and discuss how to go about bringing their enterprise to Latin America to assist its economic development. Rockefeller, now a Moscoso ally, also used these meetings to assert to the US business community that the Alliance was neither "a United States giveaway program" nor "a complete failure"—similar arguments to those Moscoso would make in defense of the Alliance.¹³⁰ Moscoso urged his Latin American counterparts not only to undertake measures that would make their particular countries more attractive to foreign private investment, but to rely on investment from private capital within their own countries. On a June 1962 trip throughout El Salvador, Moscoso met Central American businessmen through a meeting organized by the Salvadoran Industrialists' Association, where he also urged domestic private capital to take their part in bringing about the reforms the Alliance for Progress called for.¹³¹ At least one country seemed to make headway in following Moscoso's recommendations: in August 1963, Colombia successfully launched a private investment fund ("FIP, *fondo para inversiones privadas*") that would allow for the quick processing of five- to ten-year loans of three million *pesos* to help finance projects in the agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, and mining industries.¹³² Of course Colombia, under the presidency of a Democratic Left ally and a firm supporter of the Alliance, would try to follow through with Moscoso's "fomentarian revolution."¹³³ Not all Latin American nations were so receptive.

¹²⁹ Teodoro Moscoso to Glenn C. Bassett, Jr, July 23, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 11, JFKL.

¹³⁰ David Rockefeller, "Development in Latin America: The Role of the United States," address before the Economic Club of Chicago, April 23, 1963, Moscoso Papers Series 6, Box 11, JFKL.

¹³¹ *El Diario de Hoy* (San Salvador), June 7, 1962; Moscoso Papers, Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

¹³² Advertisement in *El Tiempo* (Bogotá, Colombia), August 28, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

¹³³ Carlos Caballero Argáez, *Alberto Lleras Camargo y John F. Kennedy: amistad y política internacional*, (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2014), 28, 49.

Moscoso championed the role of private capital in leading economic development for multiple reasons. Firstly, he promoted the type of development he had used for Operation Bootstrap as part of his role as an unofficial ambassador for Puerto Rico and the PPD. By alluding specifically to a “fomentarian revolution,” Moscoso reinforced the connection between the goals of the Alliance for Progress and the goals of Fomento, his former office in Puerto Rico.¹³⁴ Moscoso also championed private investment as a way to circumvent problems with administering US foreign aid. The United States, due to its economic might in the early 1960s, footed the bill for most of the foreign aid administered to Latin American nations, despite provisions in the Charter of Punta del Este that called for the contributions of multinational organizations and banks. This reality gave the US Congress, the body responsible for appropriating the money to make Alliance loans, tremendous power to determine the flow of Alliance aid. Kennedy and Moscoso constantly butted heads with Congress, which viewed foreign aid as a waste of money and thus delayed the appropriations process and cut the size of aid packages.¹³⁵ By supporting private investment throughout Latin America, Moscoso attempted to circumvent his congressional setbacks and obtain the money needed to support Alliance reforms.

Yet there were also dangerous implications to Moscoso’s “fomentarian revolution.” If Latin American nations embraced a Puerto Rican model of development, leaning on US private investment to foster economic growth, they risked losing a degree of their economic and political sovereignty.¹³⁶ Not all Latin Americans shared Moscoso’s enthusiasm for private capital; some, known as dependency theorists, argued that modernization theory and foreign assistance programs, like the Alliance, were

¹³⁴ Moscoso used the term for both domestic and international audiences: see his speech at the Sao Paulo Commission for the Alliance for Progress (November 14, 1963) and his speech before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Bradshaw Papers, JFKL.

¹³⁵ Taffet, 39-40; Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 180.

¹³⁶ Santana, 112.

tools used by the United States to maintain its hegemonic control over Latin America. Private investment would not bring about true socioeconomic reforms, but rather render the region even more dependent on US economic assistance.¹³⁷ Throughout Latin America, it seemed that only the Democratic Left was willing to buy Moscoso's assertions that private investment could help bring about progressive reform. Even then, as seen in the example of Colombia's private investment, these countries were more willing to accept private investment from their own domestic industries than from the United States. Rather than replicating Moscoso's Fomento strategies, the Democratic Left wanted support for their own progressive reforms and regarded Moscoso as their spokesperson and ally in Washington.

*"Latin Flavour" in the Alliance: Increased multilateralism?*¹³⁸

Moscoso served as a spokesman for the Democratic Left by championing the establishment of the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress (CIAP), which would allow for increased Latin American participation within the Alliance. Within a year, it became clear that the Alliance was not living up to its professed goals, and by August 1962, the first anniversary since the signing of the Charter of Punta del Este, the media had already seized upon the Alliance's shortcomings and failures. Moscoso himself displayed an acute awareness of the lack of progress in the Alliance—although he would never express any of his frustrations with either the US Congress or press, before which he repeatedly emphasized the difficulty of the Alliance's mandate and the patience necessary to see developmental change come about.¹³⁹ On August 17, 1962, which marked one year since the signing

¹³⁷ Rabe, 157.

¹³⁸ Title taken from "Alliance for Progress: Latin Flavour," *The Economist*,

¹³⁹ One remarkable example (of many) where Moscoso defended the Alliance for Progress is his letter to the editor of *The New York Herald Tribune* in response to a scathing critique of the Alliance. See, Teodoro Moscoso, "The Alliance is Not a Flop," *The New York Herald Tribune*, July 3, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

of the charter, Moscoso advised his staff against celebrating any successes, saying that “there will be time enough to celebrate when we have achieved a working alliance and an extensive progress, [and] as yet I am not satisfied that we have either.”¹⁴⁰ Political scientist John Plank notes, however, that it is important to distinguish Moscoso’s tone as exhortative—after witnessing more than his fair share of failures with Operation Bootstrap, he was well acquainted with the difficulty in seeing initial success in developmental work.¹⁴¹ Indeed, Moscoso was of the belief that development work required great patience, especially in the case of Latin America, as he held that an underdeveloped (“*infra-desarrollado*”) continent could not be expected to change its attitudes in a decade, much less its actions in the approximately two years the Alliance had been in place.¹⁴² In Plank’s view, Moscoso, ever the idealist, hoped to inspire his staff to see that the Alliance’s first anniversary was not a milestone achievement, but a marker of a long road of work that lay ahead.¹⁴³ There is some validity to this view, yet Moscoso could not have been blind to the fact that the Alliance was struggling to fulfill many of the promises laid out in Punta del Este. For all the rhetoric that the delegates at Punta del Este had included in the charter, the Alliance was not a partnership, or if it was, it was a very unequal one. No Latin American politician held a position similar to Moscoso’s in the Alliance, and as the source of the Alliance’s funding, the United States had much more say in what particular programs and which recipient nations would be prioritized.

¹⁴⁰ Moscoso quoted in Plank, 807.

¹⁴¹ By 1947, five years after Moscoso saw the building of Puerto Rico’s first industrial plant, there were only five plants in operation on the island, all of which had seen major technical difficulties and/or low revenue. For more, see Maldonado, chapter 5.

¹⁴² Teodoro Moscoso to Jaime Benítez, January 14, 1964; Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL.

¹⁴³ Plank, 807.



Teodoro Moscoso and John F. Kennedy meet with Latin American representatives of the Alliance: Argenil Plazas García of Colombia, Francisco Calazans Fernandes of Brazil, Chairman of the Council of the OAS Gonzalo J. Facio Segreda, and Secretary-General of the OAS José Mora, August 20, 1963 (JFKL).

Naturally, the clamor for increased Latin American participation within the Alliance came from Latin American leaders themselves (that is, of course, from those politically moderate enough to believe in the program's values). Juscelino Kubitschek, the Brazilian president whose sketches of an Operation Pan-America contributed to the discourse that would later be appropriated by the Kennedy administration in calling for an alliance for progress, and Alberto Lleras Camargo, the president of Colombia allied with the Democratic Left, joined together to argue for an Alliance that would better reflect the region it purported to serve. The two presidents drew up their own individual reports on

the Alliance for the OAS, presented in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in June 1963.¹⁴⁴ Lleras Camargo denounced the Alliance as a policy ploy of the United States to better control and dispose of Latin America in a rather scathing critique given his willingness to work with the foreign aid program:

“The danger of a serious corruption of the spirit of the Alliance, its progressive weakening, and the disappointment of the people with it, in addition to the continual risk that it might become a bureaucratic operation, was obvious towards the end of 1962, when the enormous rehabilitation enterprise of Latin America began to be talked of as a new form of imperialism, as a policy on the part of the United States to soothe Latin American discontent, as a giant publicity stunt...”¹⁴⁵

Speaking before a primarily Latin American audience, Lleras Camargo took on such a critical view of the Alliance in order to galvanize support for Alliance reform among other Latin American nations. For all of his objections against the program—that it was imperialistic, that it was a publicity stunt, that it was too bogged down by US bureaucratic procedures—Lleras Camargo did not want to oppose the Alliance outright or turn away from it, but rather find a way to work within the existing structure.

Lleras Camargo thus proposed the creation of an “inter-American” multilateral organ as a solution to the problems caused by the United States’ disproportionate power within the Alliance. The Charter of Punta del Este had already established an international body within the Alliance: a panel of nine experts, each hailing from a different country, that was tasked with evaluating the developmental programs of each country within the Alliance. This body, however, lacked any enforcement mechanisms to ensure the implementation of their recommendations. Lleras Camargo referred to the panel of expert’s “practical powerlessness” as a result of the Punta del Este delegations’ fear that the experts would interfere with each country’s negotiations and thus compromise their sovereignty. This decision to weaken the panel also contributed to the stifling of Latin American voices (albeit, the voices of Latin American *economists*, rather than Latin American *governments*)

¹⁴⁴ Taffet, 58.

¹⁴⁵ Alberto Lleras Camargo, Report of the Alliance for Progress to the Organization of American States, June 15, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

within the Alliance. Lleras Camargo's proposal for an inter-American committee intended to make up for the panel of experts' institutional weakness: as Camargo envisioned it, the committee would expand upon many of the panel's duties.¹⁴⁶ While the panel of experts only reviewed each country's development program, Camargo's committee would have the function of seeing those programs through ("supervising the fulfillment of national programs and foreign investment of such programs"). The proposed committee would also have the mandate to liaise between the banking, governmental, national, and inter-American bodies ("channels") involved in the Alliance—a push for decreased Latin American dependence on US funds to implement Alliance reforms.¹⁴⁷ Kubitschek's report on the



Alliance and proposal for a new inter-American committee, while delivered separately from his Colombian counterpart, echoed all of Lleras Camargo's points.

John F. Kennedy speaking at a reception honoring the Alliance's Panel of Experts, the precursor to the CIAP, March 13, 1962 (JFKL).

Both leaders hoped to use their separate

¹⁴⁶ Taffet, 58.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

reports to gain support from other Latin American leaders in making the Alliance, until that point “subject...to the occasional good-will of entities...alien to the program itself,” more self-sustaining.¹⁴⁸

Lleras Camargo and Kubitschek found a strong ally in Moscoso, who had already expressed his concerns with the lack of a “sense of national involvement with the purpose and ideals of the Alliance” among Latin American countries and their governments after not even a year into his role as US coordinator for the Alliance. The Alliance, Moscoso argued, would have to be brought out from its place “up North, buried under mountains of papers in the offices of Washington bureaucrats” and to Latin America itself, where local governments would play an increased role in fulfilling the pledges of Punta del Este.¹⁴⁹ This critique of the Alliance, that Latin America was not holding up its end of the bargain, was common among US officials and circles: Kennedy and Washington policymakers often expressed their frustration with pouring money into Latin American nations whose development programs demonstrated very few results.¹⁵⁰ Yet while many in the US understood this “lack of progress” as either an unwillingness to fully participate in the Alliance or as a Latin American “misunderstanding” of the Alliance as a program to merely get money from the United States, Moscoso argued that the democratic regimes of Latin America, those governments that had voiced the strongest support for the Alliance, felt excluded from the program *ideologically*; that is, that they felt excluded from its vision and implementation. He argued that Latin American governments did not understand the Alliance as a Cold War weapon in the way that Washington did, rather, they saw the Alliance as the means for them to implement the moderate reforms that both the political right and left in their countries hoped to prevent: “The[se governments] do not see the threat of ‘creeping

¹⁴⁸ Juscelino Kubitschek, Report of the Alliance for Progress to the Organization of American States, June 15, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

¹⁴⁹ Teodoro Moscoso, “The Latin American View of the Alliance for Progress,” speech at World Affairs Conference, Marquette University, September 29, 1962, James S. Bradshaw Personal Papers, Subject Files, 1959-1972, Series 1, JFKL.

¹⁵⁰ Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 181.

socialism' [but]...the reality of hunger, disease, and hopelessness." While Moscoso always referred to the United States with the term "we," symbolizing his position as a high-ranking member of Washington's diplomatic corps, he sided with the Democratic Left in the belief that the Alliance for Progress' primary purpose was to promote progressive reform and economic development, with communist containment as an inevitable and necessary side effect.¹⁵¹ Increased Latin American participation in the Alliance, as active agents of social change rather than passive recipients of foreign aid grants and loans, would engender this progressive reform and convey to the United States' democratic allies in Latin America that the Alliance was both truly a partnership, and truly a program geared for them.

Moscoso considered various solutions to the power imbalance within the Alliance: he originally championed the role of private business in development and worked on multinational proposals for a Latin American common market as a way to decrease Latin American dependence on US "handouts." Once aware of Lleras Camargo and Kubitschek's calls for an inter-American committee for the Alliance, he lent the initiative its full support. Moscoso, who had close ties to both the Brazilian and Colombian president, first began drafting plans on how the US representative to the proposed committee would contribute to its mandate.¹⁵² Three months after the OAS review of the Alliance, Moscoso submitted his recommendation to President Kennedy in favor of the establishment of this multilateral committee, which Moscoso named "the Committee for Inter-American Development (CID)." Before presenting his final recommendation to the president, Moscoso managed to obtain the crucial support of Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State, whose endorsement of the

¹⁵¹ As Moscoso put it: "[The] chief shortcoming of the alliance [is] the absence of a positive ideological drive on the Southern continent," Moscoso speech at 1963 World Affairs Conference, Bradshaw Papers, Series 1, JFKL.

¹⁵² "Organization of Supporting Activities for the U.S. Representative to IA-ECOSOC and CIAP," rough draft, January 8, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 2, JFKL.

committee lent additional weight to Moscoso's recommendation.¹⁵³ By securing the support of officials such as Secretary Rusk, Moscoso also ensured that plans to formulate a new inter-American branch within the Alliance for Progress would go forward under the new Lyndon B. Johnson administration. In December 1963, an IA-ECOSOC meeting in São Paulo reviewed the Alliance's performance after two years; following many rounds of debate, the new inter-American committee was created.¹⁵⁴

The creation of an Inter-American committee for the Alliance for Progress would diminish the United States' power within the program, which would subsequently give Moscoso, as the head of the US-side of Alliance operations, less control over the program—at least, it would in theory. A Washington newspaper noted this shift in power dynamics, remarking that:

“The Latin who becomes chairman of this hemispheric committee would replace Teodoro Moscoso, the United States co-ordinator whose intense dedication has stilled earlier criticisms of his administrative capacities, as the figurehead of the Alliance for Progress. No one wants this more than Moscoso, who is keenly conscious that a successful Alliance for Progress will be the sum of all the nations.”¹⁵⁵

In his 1963 State of the Union Address, Kennedy called for increased Latin American participation in the Alliance, stating that “the Alliance would not succeed if it were only another name for U.S. handouts, [but] it can succeed only as the Latin American nations themselves devote their best effort to fulfilling its goals.”¹⁵⁶ This definition of “participation,” however, greatly differed from Kubitschek and Lleras Camargo's. While the presidents of Brazil and Colombia envisioned greater Latin American participation in determining which programs the Alliance would support and how funds would be disbursed, Kennedy expected better Latin American compliance with US conditions for disbursing

¹⁵³ Teodoro Moscoso to John F. Kennedy, “Memo to the President Recommending the Creation of a Committee for Inter-American Development,” September 10, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 3, JFKL.

¹⁵⁴ “Para formar el CIAP, Ecos después de São Paulo,” *Visión*, December 13, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

¹⁵⁵ “Latin Responsibility in Alliance: Apparent Readiness of Some to Act Called Encouraging to Uncle Sam,” *The Evening Star*, July 2, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

¹⁵⁶ John F. Kennedy, State of the Union Address,

funds. Indeed, proposals for an Inter-American Committee for the Alliance, the type of participation that Latin American governments expected to have in the program, were met with strong opposition from the United States.¹⁵⁷ As Taffet notes, the congress members on the Senate and House foreign appropriations committees were loathe to devote so much money in loans for foreign countries, and only contributed to Alliance projects on the condition that money would be disbursed in segments, with further loans given after the recipient country demonstrated both full compliance with US demands and appropriate use of the money they had received. In order to receive congressional appropriations, Moscoso announced to the nations of Latin America that the United States would not send to countries that “did not try to help themselves.”¹⁵⁸

Interestingly, official documents from the committee overstated the Latin American origins and contributions of Lleras Camargo and Kubitschek. In the official notes prepared for a meeting of US and Latin American ambassadors and mission directors, the section on the official history of the committee credited the presidents of Colombia and Brazil with developing the committee.¹⁵⁹ This history is certainly not incorrect, yet as Taffet argues, while “the ideal of Latin American governance of the Alliance for Progress” drove the committee’s creation, it was the United States’ decision to support the committee that allowed it to come into being (just as it was a United States decision that curbed the committee’s authority).¹⁶⁰ What Taffet fails to recognize, however, is that the United States did not come to accept further Latin American participation—or the veneer of this participation—in the Alliance of its own accord: Moscoso played a key role in echoing and circulating the ideas of Latin American leaders in Washington and bringing them directly to both Kennedy and officials within

¹⁵⁷ Rogelio Herrera, “To Strengthen Alliance: Creation of Committee in Alliance for Progress Opposed,” *The New York Times*, June 19, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

¹⁵⁸ Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

¹⁵⁹ “Notes for Meeting with Ambassadors and Mission Directors,” Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 3, JFKL.

¹⁶⁰ Taffet, 58.

USAID and the State Department. Washington reversed its initial opposition to the formation of this committee only after Moscoso presented his own recommendation of an inter-American committee and obtained the support of key figures within the State Department. His work in bringing the CIAP to life exemplifies yet another way in which Moscoso was able to inject the foreign policy positions of the PPD into the United States' foreign policy. Indeed, Moscoso considered the creation of this multilateral arm to be one of his greatest successes within the Alliance. The Sao Paulo-based Spanish-language political review *Visión* noted in its profile of the CIAP that Moscoso, who had previously cautioned against “celebrating” the first anniversary of the Alliance, told his staff that in that year they had finally found something in the Alliance for Progress worth being proud of (“*algo de que enorgullecerse.*”)¹⁶¹

While the CIAP was intended to bring increased Latin American participation in the Alliance, it was too little, too late. The committee only came into being in 1964, despite the fact that objections for increased Latin American participation in the Alliance, one of the motivating factors behind the creation of the Alliance, had been voiced since 1962. Furthermore, the countries in the Alliance for Progress experienced disproportionate representation on the six-member committee. Five of the representatives would be rotated on a two-year basis, allowing each nation the opportunity to eventually have representation on the committee, though not all at once. Only one member, the sixth, would be a permanent member on the committee, a privileged role that fell naturally to the United States representative.¹⁶² Committee headquarters would be in Washington, DC, although the first CIAP meeting did establish that cities in other OAS member states could also serve as hosts for CIAP

¹⁶¹ The 1964 U.S. Army Area Handbook for Brazil refers to *Visión* and its separate Portuguese language counterpart *Visão* as a biweekly review, published in the style of the US *Newsweek* or *Time*, of more conservative leaning and “good quality report;” “Latinización de la Alianza,” *Visión*, August 23, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 2, Box 3, JFKL.

¹⁶² “Latin Role in Alliance at Its Peak,” *The Washington Post*, February 20, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

meetings.¹⁶³ Finally, while the committee would attempt to obtain funding from other multinational and non-governmental sources, the United States, as primary Alliance lender, would retain “ultimate” control of its own aid funds, despite “heavy hemispheric pressure to heed the recommendations of the proposed committee.”¹⁶⁴ Although the inter-American committee would allow for greater Latin American control over the Alliance, and certainly provided countries receiving Alliance money with more of a say than they had had under the panel of experts, it failed to truly level the playing field between Latin America and the United States.



Alberto Lleras Camargo, Juscelino Kubitschek, and Teodoro Moscoso, (JFKL).

¹⁶³ “Observations of the First CIAP Meeting, March 17 - 26, 1964,” March 31, 1964, Moscoso Collection, Section 13, Cartapacio 1092h, FLMM.

¹⁶⁴ “Larger Role in Alliance is Planned for Latins,” *The Washington Post*, July 23, 1963; Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

Part IV: Bound for Failure?

The Alliance for Progress, supposedly conceived as a multinational partnership to quell socioeconomic upheavals throughout Latin America, is considered by historians to be a failure. The Alliance did little to boost the overall economies of the Latin American nations it targeted: none, for example, met the intended 2.5% yearly GDP growth rate. Rabe also notes that the Alliance for Progress years witnessed Latin American's relative decline as a US trading partner, as well as a decline of direct US investment in the region, from 26% of total US investment in 1960 to 16% in 1970.¹⁶⁵ Aid was unevenly disbursed, with countries considered to pose a threat to US national security by being at risk of succumbing to communism receiving disproportionate attention from the United States.¹⁶⁶ The Alliance, nestled under the US Agency for International Development and the State Department and thus never fully institutionalized in Washington, took on a political and ideological bent: its focus was not so much the economic development of Latin America, but the containment of communism. The United States thus hoped to propagate a seemingly revolutionary ideology to ensure that Latin American nations would pursue socioeconomic reform in a way that would align with US political and regional interests. Yet the Alliance achieved these results while isolating the Latin American politicians who were willing to contribute to and adhere to the goals professed in Punta del Este, undermining the scheme's "alliance" aspect. Indeed, communism did not spread beyond Cuba, and the United States maintained its hegemonic control over the Western hemisphere; considering these two outcomes, Taffet argues that the Alliance was successful in securing the US interests underpinning the scheme.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Rabe, 166.

¹⁶⁶ Taffet, 53-57, 67.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

The Alliance also proved to be a failure for the Muñoz administration's aspirations for an increased Puerto Rican influence on US foreign policy. Moscoso was quick to discover that his position at the head of the Alliance did not afford him the same operational control that he had enjoyed in San Juan while directing Operation Bootstrap. The Alliance was the crucible for an ideology rather than a government institution, and ultimately, Moscoso's role was to serve as an ambassador for the Alliance, rather than as its director. Washington viewed the PPD's suggestions and views on foreign policy as useful, but only so long as they aligned with and fulfilled pre-existing US interests in Latin America. The Alliance increasingly demonstrated the Muñoz administration's inability to implement its foreign policy goals, undermining Puerto Rico's role as leader of Latin America's Democratic Left.¹⁶⁸ As Vélez Rodríguez notes, Puerto Rico's lack of political sovereignty made it difficult to implement any official, institutionalized foreign policy during the 1950s, whereas the outbreak of Cold War tensions in the Caribbean incentivized PPD leaders to work with, and within, the United States' foreign policy apparatus.¹⁶⁹ Yet these leaders soon realized that the United States had little interest in incorporating these distinct Puerto Rican views on Latin America into its foreign policy and that Washington did little beyond providing lip service to the notion of Puerto Rico as a bridge between the Americas.

*"Bureaucratic Millstone Around My Neck:" Moscoso's institutional limitations*¹⁷⁰

Despite being the head of the Alliance, Moscoso faced various institutional limitations that rendered him subordinate to higher ranking officials in USAID and the US State Department. Firstly, for all the months-long deliberation that had gone into preparing Moscoso to assume leadership over

¹⁶⁸ Vélez Rodríguez, 352.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 183.

¹⁷⁰ Title taken from a line by Moscoso, quoted in Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 178.,

the Alliance, the particularities of his position were much less clearly defined. This ambiguity could partially be attributed to the program's own sense of ambiguity: the Alliance was more of a proxy for anti-communist ideology than a full-fledged government institution, as evidenced by the contradictions that emerged in the time it took to name Moscoso the Alliance for Progress Coordinator (or USAID's Regional Administrator for Latin America, depending on the source).¹⁷¹ This confusion emerged from Alliance's inclusion under USAID, which in turn fell under the purview of the Department of State.¹⁷² Operation Bootstrap had similarly been an ideological pursuit: its success was due to the fact that Moscoso led Fomento, the company providing the institutional support for Bootstrap's lofty goals. This full control over Puerto Rican industrialization, along with his high rank in the PPD, gave the businessman incredible authority in carrying out his economic reforms.¹⁷³ Moscoso, who in retrospect lamented his bureaucratic naivete in not "asking [Kennedy] for some commitments" in terms of "staff, organization, [and] tie-ins with other agencies of government," lacked this same authority in Washington and subsequently spent much of his tenure trying to cement the Alliance's institutional independence.¹⁷⁴ Moscoso aimed to move the Alliance into its own office in a separate building in Washington, where he could be directly responsible for his staff and the management of his office, yet ultimately failed to move out of the State Department building.¹⁷⁵

As the Alliance's most senior official, Moscoso's responsibilities inevitably led to overlap with the authorities of USAID and State Department officials. The language of the White House Press release on Moscoso's new appointment offers glimpses into this potential conflict: Moscoso, tasked

¹⁷¹ William D. Rogers, *The Twilight Struggle: The Alliance for Progress and the Politics of Development in Latin America*, (New York: Random House, 1967), 192.

¹⁷² Taffet, 31.

¹⁷³ The Puerto Rican *Centro de Investigaciones Sociales* (CIS, Center for Social Research) and its US director Millard Hansen oversaw various studies of insular economic development in the late 1940s and 1950s. None of these studies, according to Michael Lapp, "question[ed] the faith of the Puerto Rican Economic Development Administration [*Fomento*] and its director." Lapp, 180.

¹⁷⁴ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 20.

¹⁷⁵ Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 177-178.

with the “primary responsibility for [the] supervision and coordination of all Alliance for Progress programs,” was also proclaimed as having left his role as US Ambassador to become the “Regional Administrator for Latin America in the AID Agency.”¹⁷⁶ This split view of Moscoso’s role demonstrates that for all of the suggestions hatched out by the Latin American Task Force and by the Punta del Este Charter, Kennedy still had not fully established *how* this program would achieve its goals. Moscoso recalled that he had been puzzled by his first meeting with Kennedy to discuss his role in the Alliance for Progress: although the October 26 telegram noted that both Hamilton, the head of USAID, *and* Kennedy had discussed Moscoso in light of the Alliance, Hamilton was not present at the in-person meeting between Moscoso and Kennedy in Washington.¹⁷⁷ Moscoso retrospectively acknowledged this discussion as the moment where he “started to get the uneasy feeling that this was going to be one of those situations where you perhaps have to work with two bosses, one of them who



doesn’t exactly understand what the other one wants or how he wants it done.”¹⁷⁸

Teodoro Moscoso’s Swearing-In Ceremony as Alliance Coordinator in the White House Fish Room, November 14, 1961, (JFKL).

¹⁷⁶ Office of the White House Press Secretary, November 6, 1961, Moscoso Collection, Series 27, Cartapacio 2444a, FLMM.

¹⁷⁷ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 25-26. Emphasis on the “and” is Moscoso’s; the telegram available in the Moscoso papers in the FLMM corroborate that both men were mentioned in the message.

¹⁷⁸ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 27.

Moscoso's swearing-in ceremony further demonstrates the lack of definition for the Alliance and its coordinator: while the release bore the title "Swearing-in ceremonies for Teodoro Moscoso as Assistant Administrator for Latin America [in the] AID Agency," the verbal exchange between Moscoso and the president only referenced the Alliance for Progress.¹⁷⁹ Moscoso recalled that the president, alarmed when he discovered that his Alliance coordinator was about to be sworn-in in the fifth floor reception room (as was typical for USAID officials), called to inform Moscoso that he had already arranged for the press to come to the White House Fish Room.¹⁸⁰ The ceremony thus happened the way the president wanted, but the official press release made references to both USAID and the Alliance for Progress. In the two to three weeks that it took to bring Moscoso back from Venezuela and inducted into his new appointment, no official view of the Alliance and the role of its leader had been adequately established. Indeed, Moscoso mentioned to reporters that within a week of starting his new role at the head of the Alliance for Progress, he had been presented with three different organizational charts, "each allegedly in force." While the Latin American Task Force (which Moscoso had also contributed to) had recommended a reorganization of the AID program prior to the adoption of the Alliance for Progress, no such organization had actually taken place, at least, not in a coherent enough manner to allow Moscoso to make sense of what his new role required of him.¹⁸¹

Moscoso hoped to establish the Alliance for Progress as an organization separate from USAID (and ideally, even the State Department), so that he could proceed with the same oversight and institutional freedom he had operated within the Puerto Rican bureaucracy. He often butted heads with Fowler Hamilton, the director of USAID, over the question of the Alliance's institutional

¹⁷⁹ Office of the White House Press Secretary, November 14, 1961, Moscoso Collection, Series 27, Cartapacio 2444a, FLMM.

¹⁸⁰ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 26-27.

¹⁸¹ "Should the Alliance for Progress be a separate organization?" *Newsweek*, April 9, 1962, Moscoso Collection, Cartapacio 1092, FLMM.

independence: while Hamilton asserted that separating the Alliance for Progress from the rest of USAID would only lead to further bureaucratic clutter and a duplication of positions and assignments, Moscoso insisted on the Alliance's independence as a way to fulfill its mission. Moscoso further emphasized that his talks with Kennedy left him with the "clear impression" that the president wanted "my group to have an identity of its own."¹⁸² The press, which grew increasingly critical of the Alliance as its first year continued, picked up on the tensions between the two agencies, noting that the Moscoso-led Alliance and the Hamilton-led USAID were "having difficulty agreeing on an integrated policy for the development program, which the President sees primarily as a political and philosophical concept." These difficulties were attributed to "the position of the Alliance operation in the Administration for International Development;" the results of this organizational misunderstanding was that "until recently, the Alliance has been devoting much time to its own administration and little time has been given to the type of creative thinking that is considered necessary if the program is to succeed."¹⁸³ The damages of this organizational confusion was thus twofold. Moscoso lacked the autonomy and authority to lead such a large-scale and ambitious project as the Alliance purported to be, while effort that could have been used to get the program underfoot was instead spent on solving the issue of institutional autonomy.

Moscoso never managed to establish a headquarters for the Alliance, though he did make efforts to obtain a clearer definition of his functions and the limits of his authority. On March 8, 1962, he sent a memorandum to Fowler Hamilton on proposing for structural rearrangements of staff to facilitate effective decision-making and day-to-day functioning. Enclosed as an attachment was a "suggested letter," drafted for presidential use in addressing all heads of executive government agencies, that called for clarifications to the role of Coordinator. Stressing the need to "avoid conflicting and

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ "Difficulty With Alliance" *Newsweek*, April 9, 1962, Moscoso Collection, Cartapacio 1092, FLMM.

inconsistent lending and economic assistance policies and activities,” the letter called upon the heads of executive government agencies to “advise and consult” with the Coordinator before approving or embarking upon programs that fell under the purview of Alliance activities, i.e., programs that fostered social and economic development in Latin American nations. The strongly-worded final paragraph of the draft letter read:

“In view of the scope and significance of the Alliance for Progress, it is essential that the resources and facilities of the Executive departments and agencies needed for this most important program be mobilized immediately. I therefore expect you and your agency to make available to the Alliance for Progress on a priority basis such personnel and supporting services as the U.S. Coordinator may find it necessary to request.”¹⁸⁴

Moscoso drew upon the importance the Kennedy administration ascribed to the Alliance for Progress in arguing for greater authority in his position, justifying his request for an enlarged role by emphasizing the need for efficient, swift responses among the Alliance management.

His message was passed along to the president through a memo written by Fowler Hamilton, who asked the president for a letter addressed “the heads of Executive agencies and to the appropriate U.S. representatives on the international agencies concerned” to “facilitate the effective coordination of Mr. Moscoso’s responsibilities.” Hamilton, Moscoso’s supervisor in the line of command within USAID, thus agreed that Moscoso needed to have the ability to implement and manage the aid programs to the countries requiring US assistance. An additional memo regarding the role of the Alliance Coordinator stressed, however, that the Coordinator should remain a USAID official, “subject in the line of command both to the Secretary of State and to the AID Administrator.” Doing otherwise would only muddle the bureaucratic hierarchy and “fractionate the responsibility for the administration of foreign aid.”¹⁸⁵ The Kennedy administration recognized Moscoso’s efforts to

¹⁸⁴ Teodoro Moscoso Memorandum to Fowler Hamilton, “Status of Efforts to Organize the LA Bureau,” March 8, 1962, Moscoso Collection, Series 27, FLMM; “Suggested Letter from the President to Heads of Executive Agencies of Alliance for Progress Coordination,” Moscoso Collection, Series 27, Cartapacio 2444, FLMM.

¹⁸⁵ Moscoso Collection, Series 27, Cartapacio 2444, FLMM.

formalize and strengthen his authority and to an extent, entertained them, yet refused to grant him the sufficient autonomy and authority to make the Alliance for Progress his own, in the way that Operation Bootstrap had been.¹⁸⁶ Moscoso may have been valued for his experience in economic development, but that experience did not mean that Washington was ready to let him fashion its foreign policy without supervision.

“The Need for Instilling Hope:” Promoting the Ideology of the Alliance¹⁸⁷

Lacking the requisite authority to run the Alliance on his own, Moscoso found himself relegated to an ambassadorial role that made him the program’s primary spokesperson. While he had to promote a positive image of the Alliance in both the United States and abroad, he especially needed to win over the support of the US House and Senate Appropriations Committees, the two congressional bodies responsible for determining how much aid the US would allocate to the Alliance. Before Congress, Moscoso began his appeals for greater budget allocations by emphasizing the Alliance’s successes.¹⁸⁸ Despite the optimistic pictures Moscoso painted of the Alliance, he found a strong opposition within Congress, led by House Appropriations Committee chairman Otto Passman. Both the Foreign Assistance Acts of 1962 and 1963 contained fewer allocations for Alliance aid than Moscoso had asked for.¹⁸⁹ To better prepare for grueling hearings, Moscoso established the position of Special Assistant for Congressional Presentation in his office. This staffer helped Moscoso prepare his justifications before Congress. For 1963, Moscoso was advised to prepare for various questions on the topic of balance of payments crises in Latin America.¹⁹⁰ In private, Moscoso noted

¹⁸⁶ According to Taffet: “Though Kennedy wanted the [Alliance for Progress] to be independent, he was not necessarily willing to allow it to become independent under Moscoso,” 39.

¹⁸⁷ Title taken from a letter from Teodoro Moscoso to A.W. Maldonado, January 24, 1964, Moscoso Papers Series 3, Box 5, JFKL.

¹⁸⁸ Teodoro Moscoso, speech before Senate Appropriations Committee, 1963, Bradshaw Papers, JFKL.

¹⁸⁹ Foreign Assistance Act 1962, Foreign Assistance Act 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 11, JFKL.

¹⁹⁰ Barry Passett to Teodoro Moscoso, July 10, 1963, Series 2, Box 5, JFKL.

that if he failed to adequately prepare for such hearings or to present the Alliance in the most positive light, “we [would] have great difficulty in retaining what little consistent support the program has had in Congress.”¹⁹¹

To better obtain Latin American enthusiasm and support for the Alliance for Progress, the United States Information Agency (USIA) worked to promote the vision and ideals of the Alliance through a massive propaganda and public relations machine.¹⁹² Moscoso and USIA maintained a close partnership. He would deliver talks to the agency to ensure that USIA publications matched official Alliance positions, while also maintaining tabs on USIA operations and publications, as well as its justifications before US Congress.¹⁹³ The agency used varied forms of media to promote the Alliance,



from radio and TV shows, pamphlets and other publications, news stories, and even comic books geared towards younger audiences.¹⁹⁴ Moscoso himself contributed to many of these publications: he wrote a Spanish-language pamphlet entitled “Revolution against poverty, illiteracy, and social injustice,” intended to be distributed throughout Latin America in order to garner support for the Alliance project by placing the program in rhetorical conversation with Latin American desires for rapid change.¹⁹⁵ In another Spanish-language brochure, Moscoso explained the Alliance for Progress in great detail, highlighting all of the industries that the project

¹⁹¹ Teodoro Moscoso to A.W. Maldonado, January 24, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 5, JFKL.

¹⁹² Taffet, 43.

¹⁹³ Moscoso talking points for USIA, March 8, 1963; United States Information Agency, “18th Report to Congress of the US Advisory Commission on Information,” January 31, 1963, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 10, JFKL.

¹⁹⁴ Taffet, 43.

¹⁹⁵ Teodoro Moscoso, “Revolución Contra la Pobreza, Analfabetización, Injusticia Social,” Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 9, JFKL. Image shown above.

aimed to impact.¹⁹⁶ This massive publicity campaign intended to present the Alliance for Progress as an appealing and necessary project, in order to reverse the more commonly-held view, in Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Arturo Morales Carrión's words, that the program was merely another way for the United States to act as a regional "moneylender."¹⁹⁷

In public, Moscoso praised the Alliance's potential as an ideological force galvanizing progressives within the United States, not just throughout Latin America. While giving the 1962 commencement address at Fordham, where he was also bestowed with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the university, Moscoso emphasized the role of the university in preparing the United States' "future overseas representatives" as bearers of their country's goodwill and commitment to a liberal progressive mission. He especially emphasized the Alliance for Progress' unique role as "a program with deeply political and ideological meaning...a program summoning the material as well as intellectual and spiritual resources of all our twenty [American] Republics."¹⁹⁸ In this speech, Moscoso tried to instill a passion for the Alliance's professed values among these graduates, some of whom might have had an interest in politics and foreign affairs, while also referring to the Alliance in the same pan-American rhetoric that had been used by delegations at Punta del Este to frame the program's vision. The emphasis on the deep "political and ideological meaning" of the Alliance was a motif that Moscoso often resorted to, yet Moscoso also publicly emphasized how institutional independence would strengthen the symbolic nature of the Alliance and program to "better capture" people's "imagination."¹⁹⁹ In a letter to A.W. Maldonado, a *San Juan Star* reporter who had praised Moscoso's efforts in his articles, Moscoso expressed his desire to always speak about the Alliance in

¹⁹⁶ Alliance for Progress brochure, Muñoz Marín Papers, Series 5, Cartapacio 50, FLMM.

¹⁹⁷ Arturo Morales Carrión, Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, April 9, 1962, Department of State, S/P Files: Lot 69 D 121, American Republics, 1962.

¹⁹⁸ Teodoro Moscoso, Fordham University Commencement Address, June 13, 1962, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 9, JFKL.

¹⁹⁹ "Should the Alliance for Progress be a separate organization?" *Newsweek*, April 9, 1962, Moscoso Collection, Cartapacio 1092, FLMM.

optimistic tones to gather as much support as he could for a “program [with] limited public appeal and hardly any constituency.” Perhaps Moscoso, who in private had his reservations about the Alliance’s success, publicly praised the Alliance to further give it the ideological appeal he publicly claimed it had and to convince Washington to give it the institutional independence needed to further that appeal.²⁰⁰

The PPD intended for Puerto Rican involvement in the Alliance to be the culmination of its attempts to develop and follow its own foreign policy, independent of Washington, after a decade of cultivating political networks with the leaders of Latin America’s Democratic Left. The Muñoz administration saw Moscoso’s appointment at the head of Kennedy’s ambitious project as a way to inject the political aims of the PPD and its Latin American allies into US foreign policy; furthermore, the PPD saw its involvement in the Alliance for Progress as an exercise in insular autonomism as defined by Ayala and Bernabé—a push for greater Puerto Rican political power within the existing colonial relationship between the island and the United States.²⁰¹ Yet Moscoso quickly discovered that his position at the helm of the Alliance for Progress was an untenable one: institutional vagueness and bureaucratic hierarchies meant that Moscoso still had to respond to superiors within USAID and the State Department. Lacking the requisite authority to run the Alliance for Progress on his own, Moscoso found himself relegated to an ambassadorial role, promoting an ambitious program that was highly unlikely to succeed. Indeed, one cannot determine the success of the Alliance’s public relations campaign: there is no information to suggest that Moscoso’s pamphlets or USIA’s propaganda changed Latin American opinions of the program. Given that Moscoso identified “impediments in Latin America” such as unsatisfactory country participation, political instability, and national conflicts with US investors, as one of the main reasons for the Alliance’s lack of success in a document

²⁰⁰ Teodoro Moscoso to A.W. Maldonado, January 24, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 5, JFKL.

²⁰¹ Ayala and Bernabé, 61.

to his replacement Thomas Mann, it is not unreasonable to surmise that the Alliance's propaganda machine did little to incentivize Latin Americans to contribute their part or to see the value in the program.²⁰²

*"Spiritless Alliance:" The Alliance for Progress under the LBJ Administration*²⁰³

The Alliance for Progress under the Johnson Administration brought about many administrative changes, while also further revealing how the Alliance had stunted Moscoso's authority. Johnson, aware of the structural and bureaucratic problems that caused the Alliance's slowness and inefficiency, created a new position within his cabinet, that of Undersecretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. This position had a higher rank, and thus greater power, than the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, the role occupied by Edwin Martin (Moscoso's supervisor within USAID, but luckily a willing collaborator) under the Kennedy administration. Johnson tasked this new undersecretary of state, who would also serve as a special advisor to the president, with coordinating the Alliance for Progress. He chose Thomas Mann, the US Ambassador to Mexico, to take over, effectively replacing not only Martin, but Moscoso, who went on to serve as the US representative on the inter-American committee he had helped to create.²⁰⁴ Mann, a mainland American career diplomat handpicked by the president to hold a position higher than any other key players in the Alliance for Progress (i.e., Moscoso and Martin) had held, was thus positioned to exert greater control over US-Latin American relations than his predecessors.

Mann's appointment symbolized a change in how the Alliance for Progress was to be run under this new presidential administration. In March 1964, Mann expressed his views towards

²⁰² Teodoro Moscoso to Thomas Mann, December 21, 1963, Moscoso Collection, Series 27, Cartapacio 2444, FLMM.

²⁰³ Title taken from former assistant to Moscoso, Robert B. Goldmann, Moscoso Collection, Series 13, FLMM.

²⁰⁴ "Latin Role in Alliance at Its Peak," *The Washington Post*, February 20, 1964, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

US-Latin American relations in a secret talk with Washington officials, the contents of which were then leaked to the *New York Times*. The Mann Doctrine, as reporter Tad Szulc referred to the recent appointee's position, consisted of a nationalistic foreign policy that "may disregard the desires and ideals of the Latin American masses struggling with their own special problems." The United States would not take an "*a priori* position" against governments installed through military coups, and instead treat stable undemocratic governments in Latin America as they would treat stable democratic governments.²⁰⁵ The Democratic Left, which once saw a potential ally in the Alliance (and especially in Moscoso), would no longer receive any preferential treatment from Washington. Mann, "known to be a specialist in encouraging North American investment," believed in protecting US business interests in Latin America and implementing a "business-oriented" foreign policy towards Latin America (as opposed to a foreign policy plan designed by the "liberal policymakers" of the Kennedy era).²⁰⁶ The Mann Doctrine thus prioritized Latin American "political stability:" the United States was to focus on establishing relations with stable, non-hostile regimes, regardless of their political system, protecting its political, security, and business interests throughout Latin America. The championing of economic development became a secondary concern. Liberals in the United States decried such a stance: the *New York Times* stressed the need "to recapture the moral leadership [of the Kennedy era] and to state in positive terms the intention of the United States actively to encourage democracy in Latin America...and actively to discourage anti-democratic extremism both of the right and of the left."²⁰⁷

Yet as the press decried the Johnson administration's embrace of the Mann Doctrine, one must note that the changes Mann introduced were not new to either US-Latin American relations or the Alliance for Progress. The so-called changes introduced by Mann must be recognized, Taffet

²⁰⁵ "What Is the Mann Doctrine?" *The New York Times*, March 21, 1964.

²⁰⁶ "The Liberal and the Businessman," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 7, 1964.

²⁰⁷ "What Is the Mann Doctrine?" *The New York Times*, March 21, 1964.

argues, as “evolutionary rather than revolutionary.”²⁰⁸ While the Kennedy administration openly favored Democratic Left leaders such as Venezuela’s Rómulo Betancourt, and Moscoso found ways to support and attempt to incorporate the ideas of his allies, the United States was reluctant to give Latin Americans equal say in the Alliance.²⁰⁹ Though the Kennedy administration voiced its support for Latin American nations, Moscoso recalled how Washington did nothing to stop the military overthrow of Guatemalan president Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes in March 1963, despite having knowledge of the military’s plans.²¹⁰ Kennedy-era “liberal policymakers” did not always have Latin America’s best interests at heart. The Alliance under Kennedy did not necessarily have a more progressive mission; the Alliance under Johnson was revealed to be a reiteration, rather than reinvention, of US policy.

Mann’s preference for business and private capital also had precedents in the Kennedy years. Moscoso, who owed his position in Washington to his success in bringing US private capital investment to Puerto Rico through Operation Bootstrap, had always favored capitalist interests and capitalist-supported development. As coordinator of the Alliance for Progress, Moscoso pushed for business to get more involved in socio-economic development, though as much as he encouraged US business to get involved, he also tried to incentivize business leaders and industrialists from Latin

²⁰⁸ Taffet, 61.

²⁰⁹ In his oral history interview with the Kennedy Presidential Library, Moscoso notes that Kennedy “admired Betancourt for making great strides in achieving a degree of socio-economic growth and instituting very substantial reforms measured by the commitments made at Punta del Este. Venezuela had perhaps done more than any country in Latin America in trying to achieve the commitments of Punta del Este.” See Moscoso Oral History, 123.

²¹⁰ Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, the president of Guatemala who spent millions of pesos in public works, social services, and impact projects, faced opposition from the extreme right. While Fuentes lacked any veritable communist credentials, a point Moscoso recalled making in his attempt to get Washington to oppose the coup, other Kennedy aides insisted that Fuentes posed a communist threat, with some even encouraging US support of the coup. Kennedy heeded their advice, and the United States made no move to stop the coup led by the country’s military elite on March 26. The coup’s success materialized liberal Latin American fears of the extreme right’s opposition to their reforms. Moscoso regarded this as a watershed moment during his time in Washington, saying that Kennedy’s decision made the president fall a “step or two” from the “high pedestal” Moscoso had once, “perhaps foolishly,” regarded him with. See: Moscoso Oral History Interview, 126-130; “GUATEMALA COUP DISTURBING TO U.S.: Overthrow Viewed as Blow to Political Democracy,” *The New York Times*, March 31, 1963; “The Coup in Guatemala,” *The New York Times*, April 1, 1963; Jeremy L. Weaver, “The Military Elite and Political Control in Guatemala, 1963-1966,” *Social Science Quarterly*, 50.1 (1969), 127-130.

America themselves to contribute to their country's reforms. The Mann Doctrine and the Johnson administration's management of the Alliance for Progress did not represent necessarily the inauguration of a "new" type of US foreign policy towards Latin America, distinct from Kennedy's "moral leadership," but rather the abandonment of the pretense of working with Latin America to bring about progressive reform.



Thomas Mann on the cover of TIME Magazine, January 31, 1964, (TIME Digital Archives.)

This reimagining of the Alliance for Progress dealt a significant blow to Moscoso and Muñoz, who had envisioned the program as a way for Puerto Rico's PPD to strengthen its stature within the United States and throughout Latin America. While Moscoso embraced his new role on the inter-American committee for the Alliance for Progress, his departure from his position in charge of the Alliance (despite the fact that his control over the program was always

curtailed by Washington) signified that the United States would no longer entertain the notion of Puerto Rico as a mediator between the United States and Latin America.²¹¹ The Democratic Left also suffered from the ouster of their political allies from Washington; in denouncing the Johnson administration's abandoning of Punta del Este's ideals, they voiced their worries that their political

²¹¹ Teodoro Moscoso to A.W. Maldonado, January 24, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 6, Box 5, JFKL.

opinions would no longer have a way of reaching Washington.²¹² Despite Moscoso's limitations in his role, he was regarded as being able to funnel Democratic Left's ideas to the White House. With Moscoso gone, so too was the illusion that Washington actually wanted to cooperate with the Democratic Left.

Following two years of questionable success, the Alliance for Progress under the Johnson administration brought about many changes to the administration of the alliance, while also revealing many truths about the project. Historians of the Alliance tend to focus on the first: that the Alliance was not a partnership, but a reiteration of the US-Latin American political dynamic that many Latin Americans found overbearing. Nor was the Alliance a revolutionary plan dedicated to reform; instead, it took the form of a US foreign aid program that aimed to maintain stability and squash potential communist and communist-sympathizing threats.²¹³ Yet the Johnson administration's leadership over the Alliance also reveals while Moscoso was an important figure, he could not influence the program as much as he would have liked. The rhetoric of Puerto Rico as a "bridge" between north and Latin America meant little to the way the Alliance actually operated. Indeed, Moscoso's successor, a non-Puerto Rican, was given much more authority than Moscoso himself ever had. The Alliance for Progress, which failed to bring about the economic and social reforms it promised, also ultimately failed to cement the PPD's status as key players in US-Latin American relations.

²¹² "Lleras Sees Crisis for Alliance Pact," *The Washington Post*, May 21, 1964, Moscoso Papers, Series 4, Box 6, JFKL.

²¹³ Taffet, 195-197.

Epilogue: “A Lasting Contribution”

On May 18, 1964, Teodoro Moscoso, who had just made his return to private life after four years in the US foreign service, sat down for an interview with the newly-created John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, as part of a large oral history project to memorialize the late president.²¹⁴ After speaking with Moscoso about the formation and early days of the Alliance, the interviewer, Leigh Miller, had one more inquiry. The conversation, edited for clarity, went as follows:

Miller: Ted...there is one footnote to history perhaps you could throw some light on. The president, as I recall, in his inauguration address mentioned the *Alianza para Progreso*. Later on, the “el” was put in, so that it becomes *Alianza para el Progreso*...

Moscoso: *Alianza para Progreso* was in the inaugural address?

Miller: Yes...which I understand is not correct Spanish—

Moscoso: This was my contribution.

Miller: Did you ever discuss this [change] with the president?

Moscoso: No, no, I just stuck it in there and I said that this is the way it should be. And no one doubted that I would, at least, know where to put the prepositions.

Miller: I thought that this might be a lasting contribution.²¹⁵

Was this a form of banter, or a critique of the Alliance for Progress as a whole? Contemporaries of the Alliance criticized the program for a multitude of reasons: that it acted too slowly to bring about any considerable changes, that it was overburdened by organizational and administrative troubles, that it never seriously engaged its Latin American partners in a veritable alliance, and that it was just a tool for US Cold War politics and ultimately unconcerned with Latin American development. Moscoso himself, at least in private, shared some of those disillusionments. Later, historians amplified those criticisms: as Taffet notes, the economic disparities between the United States and Latin America, the global interests of the US, and paternalistic assumptions about US superiority made the Alliance merely a continuation of decades of US policy towards Latin America.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Teodoro Moscoso to Luis Muñoz Marín, May 15, 1964, Muñoz Collection, Series 2, FLMM.

²¹⁵ Moscoso JFKL Oral History Interview, 57.

²¹⁶ Taffet, 197.

Yet this thesis (and, I would argue, Moscoso and Miller's conversation) does not concern the successes and failures of the Alliance for Progress per se, but the successes and failures of Puerto Rico's *Partido Popular Democrático* in using the Alliance as a prosthetic tool of its own foreign policy. The Cuban Revolution forced Washington to reshape the rhetoric behind its relations with Latin America, which made the Kennedy administration seemingly more willing to accept the Muñoz administration's views and suggestions. Key PPD leaders found themselves able to enter US foreign policy—an unprecedented situation in US-Puerto Rican affairs, and indeed a remarkable achievement. But what happened once they got there? What was the lasting contribution of Teodoro Moscoso, the PPD implant in Washington, to the Alliance for Progress?

As Moscoso himself put it, his contribution was to correct the president's Spanish. He did so by giving the Alliance for Progress a Latin American face—and a familiar face as well, for the Democratic Left leaders who were close allies of his party in Puerto Rico were also the Latin American actors most likely to buy into the Alliance. Moscoso's leadership in the Alliance represented a symbolic victory for Bootstrap-style economics and Democratic Left political thinking. In this sense, too, Moscoso served as a translator for Washington's policies, as he tried to frame the Alliance for Progress as a US response to the Democratic Left's political aspirations. Moscoso ultimately failed at this translation, as it was an inaccurate one: the United States incorporated the PPD and Democratic Left's views on the Alliance because the Kennedy administration was already looking into responding to the threats of the Cuban Revolution by backing liberal democracies, rather than military dictatorships. This change in rhetoric within US foreign policy, which on the surface appeared to align with the foreign policy views the PPD had developed throughout the 1950s, created the illusion that Muñoz and Moscoso could play an outsized role in formulating US policy and in mediating between the US and Latin America in foreign affairs—yet their aspiration ultimately crashed against Washington's

headstrong determination to assert its hegemonic dominance over Latin America. While Moscoso made many contributions to the Alliance, from his endorsement of the CIAP to his role in promoting the Alliance as a whole, none of them succeeded in leaving a uniquely Puerto Rican mark in US foreign policy.

The Alliance itself was a fleeting program: while Moscoso echoed the liberal policymakers who claimed that the “spirit of the Alliance” died along with Kennedy, a farcical statement given that the Alliance under Kennedy was never as revolutionary as it marketed itself to be, there is some validity to his words.²¹⁷ The Johnson administration did disregard the Alliance for Progress, which was eventually more fully consumed by USAID and rendered a buzzword, at best. Following the Gulf of Tonkin incident, the United States began to see Vietnam as its primary Cold War battleground. Latin America ceased to be the “critical area” Kennedy believed it to be; the Alliance for Progress fizzled out.²¹⁸ Luis Muñoz Marín’s governorship ended in 1965; no Puerto Rican leader has since attempted to replicate his foreign policy aspirations. Since then, Puerto Rican politics have turned inwards, consumed by the question of status. That is not to say that the Muñoz administration’s foreign policy was *not* concerned with status: it certainly was. According to Muñoz, it was the ELA that allowed Puerto Rico to become a showcase for democracy in Cold War Latin America, to develop ties struggling liberal democratic regimes, and “to loom a little larger than its mere geographical size” in its relationship with the United States. The Muñoz administration’s Operation Bootstrap and Operation ELA had set the stage for his PPD to aspire to a greater role in the Cold War.

The archives at the Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín reveal that as Muñoz wrote letters to Kennedy, Moscoso, and Adolf Berle about the Alliance for Progress, Castro, and helping the Democratic Left, he also wrote to Kennedy, Moscoso, and Adolf Berle regarding revisions to the 1952

²¹⁷ Moscoso quoted in Maldonado, *Teodoro Moscoso*, 186.

²¹⁸ Taffet, 175.

Constitution to achieve a “perfected commonwealth” and the removal of the US Navy from the Puerto Rican island of Vieques.²¹⁹ This suggests that, through the Alliance for Progress, the PPD not only aimed to finesse an outsized role in US foreign policy, but to finesse further changes in the legislative relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. While the PPD publicly promoted the Alliance for Progress as an outgrowth of the more “equal” relationship established between island and metropole in 1952, further study of the archives could address the idea that the PPD hoped to use the Alliance to obtain even more self-governance under the commonwealth system. The ELA, as established in 1952 with much fanfare from the PPD, was not regarded as an end-all status. The question of a “revised” or “perfected” ELA, an idea that the PPD often discussed in the 1960s, played a key role in the 1966 plebiscite on status (in which Puerto Ricans voted in a referendum for their preferred political status); further research could thus explore the relationship between the PPD’s role in the Alliance for Progress and the PPD’s attempts at establishing a more autonomous political status.²²⁰ Yet the fact that the ELA, as set forth in the 1952 constitution, persists to this day suggests that this exploration may not uncover any “lasting contributions.”

Muñoz often praised the establishment of the ELA as a wonderful result of “Puerto Rican creativity;” in 1961, he and his lieutenants must have seen their work in the Alliance for Progress in a similar light.²²¹ Indeed, through its involvement in the Alliance at the height of the Caribbean’s relevance in the Cold War, Puerto Rico’s leadership made itself strategically crucial to the United States; I, for one, found Muñoz’s 1954 assertion to *Foreign Affairs* that the island had made itself “politically interesting” to hold true. The United States long held onto Puerto Rico for its strategic (i.e., naval) relevance after relinquishing the other territories it had acquired in 1898; in 1960, the

²¹⁹ See, for example: Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, December 28, 1961; Luis Muñoz Marín to John F. Kennedy, June 27, 1961, Muñoz Collection, Series 1, FLMM.

²²⁰ Trías Monge, 130.

²²¹ Muñoz Marín, “Puerto Rico and the U.S.,” 548.

Muñoz administration must have prided itself on reversing the dynamic, on making the island of Puerto Rico strategically important to the United States of its own accord, due to the work the PPD had done in making the island a “showcase for democracy” and a key player among Latin America’s Democratic Left. Yet the nature of the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States is like that of an elastic band: the Muñoz administration stretched it as far as they could, but it had to eventually snap back. No colonial, non-sovereign entity can implement a foreign policy without being kept in check by its metropole; this is even more so the case when the metropole is the regional, and global, hegemon. Muñoz’s most memorable contribution to Puerto Rican history is the ELA, and that same contribution prevented him and his men from becoming the critical players in international relations that they aspired to be.

Muñoz and Moscoso’s ultimate failure to manipulate US foreign policy into following the PPD’s expectations reveals that a Puerto Rican foreign policy was always unviable, as subject to the whims of US interests and strategic desires as the Latin American nations on the other end of the Alliance for Progress. As any Puerto Rican today knows, the ELA merely repackaged half a century of colonial rule. Moscoso’s role in the Alliance only contributed to the mirage that the United States would incorporate Puerto Rican concerns in its response to Cold War tensions throughout Latin America. Muñoz and Moscoso could, and did, exploit this neo-colonial relationship to enter US foreign policy, yet they found it increasingly difficult to convince Washington to listen to Puerto Rican concerns, especially when those concerns conflicted with US geopolitical interests. While Moscoso was able to contribute more to the Alliance than merely fixing Kennedy’s Spanish, his contributions would only last as long as the foreign policy of San Juan happened to align with that of Washington. It is perhaps no coincidence that no other Puerto Rican administration since has had similar diplomatic aspirations.

Appendix A: List of Abbreviations

CIAP: *Comité Inter-Americano de la Alianza para el Progreso* (“Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress”)

ELA: *Estado Libre Asociado* (“Free Associated State,” or “commonwealth”) of Puerto Rico

Fomento: *Compañía de Fomento Industrial de Puerto Rico* (“Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company”)

IA-ECOSOC: Economic and Social Council of the Organization of American States

OAS: Organization of American States

PPD: *Partido Popular Democrático* (“Popular Democratic Party”) of Puerto Rico

USAID (or AID): United States Agency for International Development

Appendix B: List of Players

Puerto Rico's Partido Popular Democrático (Popular Democratic Party)

Luis Muñoz Marín: Governor of Puerto Rico (1949 - 1965)

Teodoro Moscoso: Executive Director of Fomento (1942 - 1961), Administrator of the Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration

Arturo Morales Carrión: Undersecretary of State (1952 - 1961)

US Department of State

Teodoro Moscoso: U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela (March 14, 1961 - November 7, 1961)

Robert F. Woodward: Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (July 14, 1961 - March 17, 1962)

Edwin M. Martin: Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (May 12, 1962 - January 2, 1964)

Arturo Morales Carrión: Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (1961 - 1963)

Thomas Mann: Undersecretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (December 21, 1963 - March 17, 1965)

US Agency for International Development

Fowler Hamilton: USAID Administrator (September 30, 1961 - December 7, 1962)

David Bell: USAID Administrator (December 17, 1962 - July 31, 1966)

Teodoro Moscoso: U.S. Regional Administrator for Latin America/U.S. Coordinator of the Alliance for Progress (November 14, 1961 - December 21, 1963)

Thomas Mann: U.S. Coordinator of the Alliance for Progress (December 21, 1963 - March 17, 1965)

Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress:

Teodoro Moscoso: U.S. Representative (December 21, 1963 - May 4, 1964)

The "Democratic Left" of Latin America

Víctor Haya de la Torre: Founder of the social democratic American Popular Revolutionary Party (APRA) in Peru

Rómulo Betancourt: Exile in Puerto Rico (1954 - 1957), President of Venezuela (1945 - 1948, 1959 - 1964)

Jose Figueres: President of Costa Rica (1948 - 1949, 1953 - 1958)

Juan Bosch: President of the Dominican Republic (February 27, 1963 - September 25, 1963), Exile in Puerto Rico (September 28, 1963 - 1965)

Alberto Lleras Camargo: President of Colombia (1945 - 1946, 1958 - 1962)

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